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George Bancroft

ANEX

THE

WORKS

OF

RICHARD HURD, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF WORCESTER.

VOL. IV.

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DIALOGUES,

WITH

LETTERS

ON

CHIVALRY AND ROMANCE.

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DIALOGUE VI.

ON THE

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

ENGLISH GOVERNMENT.

BETWEEN

SIR JOHN MAYNARD, MR. SOMERS,

AND

BISHOP BURNET.

DIALOGUE VI.

ON THE CONSTITUTION OF THE ENGLISH GOVERNMENT.

SIR JOHN MAYNARD, MR. SOMERS, BISHOP BURNET.

TO DR. TILLOTSON.

OUR next meeting at Sir JOHN MAYNARD'S was on the evening of that day, when the war was proclaimed against *France*[a]. What the event of it will be, is a secret in the counsels of Providence. But if the goodness of our cause, his Majesty's known wisdom and ability, and, above all, the apparent zeal and firmness of all orders amongst us in support of this great undertaking, may give a prospect of success, we cannot, I persuade myself, but indulge in the most reasonable hopes and expectations.

[a] *7 May*, 1689.

DIALOGUE VI.

Perhaps, the time is approaching, my dear friend, which the divine goodness hath decreed for putting a stop to that outrageous power, which hath been permitted for so long a course of years to afflict the neighbouring nations. It may be, the season is now at hand, when God will vouchsafe to plead the cause of his servants, and let this mighty persecutor of the faithful know that he may not be suffered any longer to trample on the sacred rights of conscience. He may be taught to feel, that the ravages he hath committed in the fairest provinces, and the cruelties he hath exercised on the best subjects of his own kingdom, have at length awakened the divine displeasure against him. And he may live to find in our great prince (raised up, as I verily believe, to this eminence of place and power to be the scourge of tyrants, and the vindicator of oppressed nations) an insurmountable bulwark against that encroaching dominion, which threatens to deform and lay waste the rest of *Europe*.

I have already lived to see those providences, which may encourage a serious and good mind to believe that some great work is preparing in our days. I was very early in my life a witness to the high measures which were taken

and carried on by an intolerant hierarchy, acting in subserviency to an arbitrary court, in mine own country of *Scotland*. And I have lamented the oppression in which good men were held for conscience sake in all the three kingdoms. How far this tyranny was carried, and how near we were brought to the destruction of all our civil and religious rights, need not be told, and the occurrences of the two last reigns will not suffer to be forgotten. It is sufficient to observe, that when the danger was now brought to a crisis, and the minds of all men were filled with the most alarming apprehensions, it pleased God to rescue us, in a moment and by the most astonishing display of his goodness, from the impending ruin. Our chains fell off at once, as by a miracle of mercy. Our civil rights have been restored. And the legal toleration[b], we have just now obtained in consequence of the new settlement, hath put us into possession of that religious liberty, which, as men, as Christians, and as Protestants, we cannot but esteem the first of all public blessings. Preface VI.

[b] The act of toleration did not pass till 24 *May*, 1689, which lets us see at what time this preface is supposed to have been drawn up.

DIALOGUE VI.

And who knows but that, in the gracious designs of Heaven, the same hand which hath redeemed these nations from the yoke of slavery and of *Rome*, may be now employed to shake it off from the necks of our Protestant brethren on the continent[c]? The world hath seen how long and how severely they have groaned under that intolerant power, with which we are now at war. When the violences of the late reign had driven me into a sort of voluntary exile, and in the course of it I traversed some of those unhappy provinces of *France*, which were most exposed to the rigours of persecution[d], how have these eyes

[c] This was the talk of men at that time. It was perhaps in the king's intention. But the design, if it had ever been formed, miscarried; as the Bishop himself observes in his History—"The most melancholy part of the "treaty of *Ryswick* was, that no advantages were got by "it, in favour of the Protestants in *France*." Vol. iv. p. 295. *Edinb.* 1753.—Whether the blame of this lies in the king, or his parliaments, or neither, the reader is left to judge for himself, from considering the state and transactions of those times.

[d] These rigours the bishop gives a particular account of in THE HISTORY OF HIS OWN TIMES, vol. iii. *Edinb.* 1753.—Speaking of the persecution of the *French* Protestants, he says, "I went over a great part of *France*, "while it was in its hottest rage, from *Marseilles* to "*Montpelier*, and from thence to *Lyons*, and so on to

wept over the distresses of the poor sufferers, and how hath my heart bled for the merciless cruelties which I every where saw exercised upon them! The fury which appeared on that occasion, was so general and so contagious, that not only priests and court sycophants, but men of virtuous minds and generous tempers, were transported, as it were, out of their proper nature, and seemed to divest themselves of the common notices and principles of humanity. DIALOGUE VI.

In this fiery trial it hath pleased God to exercise the faith and virtues, and, as we may charitably hope, to correct the failings and vices, of his poor servants. His mercy may now, in due time, be opening a way for them to escape. And from the prosperous be-

" *Geneva.* I saw and knew so many instances of their " injustice and violence, that it exceeded even what could " have been well imagined; for all men set their thoughts " on work to invent new methods of cruelty. In all the " towns through which I passed, I heard the most dismal " accounts of things possible." p. 60.—Again—" The " fury that appeared on this occasion did spread itself " with a sort of contagion: for the intendants and other " officers, that had been mild and gentle in the former " parts of their life, seemed now to have laid aside the " compassion of Christians, the breeding of gentlemen, " and the impressions of humanity." p. 61.

ginning of this great work, what comfortable presages may we not, in all humility, form to ourselves of still farther successes?

We have a prince on the throne exactly qualified for the execution of this noble enterprise; of the clearest courage and magnanimity, and a wisdom tried and perfected in that best school, of Adversity; of dispositions the most enlarged to the service of mankind; and even quickened by his own personal resentment of former injuries to retaliate against their common oppressor.

Nor can we doubt of the concurrence of his faithful subjects, who, with one voice, have demanded the commencement of this war; and whose late deliverance, from like circumstances of distress, may be expected to animate their zeal in the support of it.

And oh! that I might see the day, when our deliverer shall become, what a bold usurper nobly figured to himself in the middle of this century[e], the soul and conductor of the Pro-

[e] Meaning CROMWELL, who, it seems, had a design of setting up "a council for the Protestant religion, in oppo-"sition to the congregation *de propagandâ fide* at *Rome*." See the Bishop's own account in his Hist. vol. i. p. 109.

resistance through all *Europe!* and that, as *Rome* hath hitherto been the centre of slavish impositions and anti-christian politics, the court of *England* may henceforth be the constant refuge and asylum of fainting liberty and religion! DIALOGUE VI.

But to turn from these flattering views, my good friend, to the recital of our late conversation; which I proceed to lay before you with the same exactness and punctuality that I did the former. You will see the reason why I cannot promise you the same entertainment from it.

We had no sooner come together, than Sir JOHN MAYNARD began with his usual vivacity.

I have been thinking, my lord, how dexterous a game I have played with you, in this inquiry of ours into the *English* government. What was obvious enough in itself, and had indeed been undertaken by many persons, I mean the vindication of our common liberties as founded in the ancient feudal constitution, is the part I assumed to myself in this debate; and have left it to your lordship to reconcile the FACT to the RIGHT: which is not only the most material point of inquiry, but the most

DIALOGUE VI. difficult, and that which the patrons of liberty have either less meddled with, or have less succeeded in explaining. For, to own an unwelcome truth, however specious our claim may be to civil liberty, the administration of government from the time of HENRY VII's accession to the crown, that is, for two entire centuries, has very little agreed to this system. The regal power, throughout this period, has been uniformly exercised in so high and arbitrary a manner, that we can hardly believe there could be any certain foundation for the people's claim to a limited monarchy. Add to this, that the language of parliaments, the decrees of lawyers, and the doctrines of divines, have generally run in favour of the highest exertions of prerogative. So that I cannot but be in some pain for the success of your undertaking, and am at a loss to conjecture in what way your lordship will go about to extricate yourself from these difficulties.

BP. BURNET.

I understand, Sir John, that your intention in setting forth the difficulties of this attempt is only, in your polite way, to enhance the merit of it. I must not however assume too much to myself. The way is clear and easy

before me. You have conducted us very agreeably through the rough and thorny part of our journey. You have opened the genius of our ancient constitution. You have explained the principles on which it was raised. All that remains for me is, only to solve doubts, and rectify appearances; a matter of no great difficulty, when, instead of groping in the dark, we are now got into open daylight, and are treading in the paths of known and authentic history. DIALOGUE VI.

MR. SOMERS.

And yet, my lord, I shall very readily acknowledge, with my Lord Commissioner, the importance of the service. For, unless appearances be strangely deceitful indeed, there is but too great reason to conclude, from the recent parts of our history, either that there never was a rightful claim in the people to civil liberty, or that they, as well as their princes, had lost all sense of it. I doubt, the most your lordship can make appear, is, that as our kings, from the coming of the Tudor line, had usurped on the ancient privileges of the subject; so the subject, at length, in our days, has, in its turn, usurped on the undisputed

DIALOGUE VI. and long-acknowledged prerogative of the sovereign. In short, I doubt there is no forming a connected system on these subjects; but that in our country, as well as in others, liberty and prerogative have prevailed and taken the ascendant at different times, according as either was checked or favoured by contingent circumstances.

BP. BURNET.

Still Mr. Somers, I see, is on the desponding side: and with better reason than before; since, if the difficulty be half so great as is pretended, this change of the speaker is little favourable to the removal of it. However, I do not despair, whether these surmises of difficulty be real or dissembled, to clear up the whole matter to both your satisfactions. The stress of it lies here: That, whereas a mixed and limited government is supposed to have been the ancient constitution in this country, the appearances, in fact, for a couple of centuries, have been so repugnant to this notion, that either the supposition must be given up as too hastily formed, or sufficient reasons must be assigned for these contradictory appearances. I embrace the latter part of this alternative without hesitation or reserve; and pretend to

lay before you such unanswerable arguments for the cause I have undertaken, as, in better hands, might amount to a perfect vindication of ENGLISH LIBERTY. DIALOGUE VI.

I take my rise from the period which my Lord Commissioner has prescribed to me; that is, from the accession of the TUDOR family.

We have henceforth, indeed, a succession of high despotic princes, who were politic and daring enough to improve every advantage against the people's liberties. And their peculiar characters were well suited to the places in which we find them. HENRY VII. was wise and provident; jealous of his authority as well as title; and fruitful in expedients to secure both. His son and successor, who had a spirit of the largest size, and, as one says[f], *feared nothing but the falling of the heavens*, was admirably formed to sustain and establish that power, which the other had assumed. And after two short reigns, which afforded the people no opportunity of recovering their lost ground, the crown settled on the head of a princess, who, with the united qualifications of her father and grandfather, surpassed them both in the arts of a winning and gracious

[f] NAT. BACON, in his Disc. part II. p. 125. *Lond.* 1739.

DIALOGUE VI.

popularity. And thus, in the compass of a century, the prerogative was now wound up to a height, that was very flattering to the views and inclinations of the STUART family.

It may be further observed, that the condition of the times was such as wonderfully conspired with the designs and dispositions of these princes.

A long and bloody war, that had well nigh exhausted the strength and vitals of this country, was, at length, composed by the fortunate successes of *Bosworth-field*. All men were desirous to breathe a little from the rage of civil wars. And the enormous tyranny of the prince, whose death had made way for the exaltation of the earl of RICHMOND, was a sort of foil to the new government, and made the rigours of it appear but moderate when set against the cruelties of the preceding reign.

The great change that followed, in the deliverance of the nation from papal tyranny, and the suppression of religious houses, was a new pretence for the extension of the royal prerogative; and the people submitted to it with pleasure, as they saw no other way to support and accomplish that important enterprise.

And, lastly, the regal power, which had gained so immensely by the rejection of the papal dominion, was carried still higher by the great work of reformation; which being conducted by a wise and able princess, was easily improved, on every occasion, to the advantage of the crown.

And thus, whether we consider the characters of the persons, or the circumstances of the times, every thing concurred to exalt the princes of the house of TUDOR to a height of power and prerogative, which had hitherto been unknown in *England*, and became, in the end, so dangerous to the constitution itself.

But you expect me, I suppose, to point to the very examples of usurpation, I have in view, and the means by which it took effect in the hands of these and the succeeding princes.

SIR J. MAYNARD.

We do indeed expect that from your lordship. For otherwise it will be thought that what you treat as an usurpation, was but the genuine exercise of the regal authority; only favoured by fortunate conjunctures, and, as you say, by great ability in the princes themselves.

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MR. SOMERS.

Perhaps, still more will be expected. For it may not be enough to tell us, what usurpations there were, or even by what means they became successful. It should further appear, methinks, that these usurpations, though they suspended the exercise of the people's liberties, did not destroy them; did not, at least, annihilate the Constitution from which those liberties were derived.

BP. BURNET.

All this will naturally come in our way, as we go along. And, since you will have me usurp the chair on this occasion, and, like the princes I am speaking of, take to myself an authority to which I have no right, let me presume a little on my new dignity; and, in what follows, discourse to you, as our manner is, without interruption or reply.

SIR J. MAYNARD.

This, it must be owned, is carrying the prerogative of the chair to its utmost height. But, if we submit to it in other places, is it reasonable you should require us to do so here? Be-

sides, your lordship forgets that I am too old to be a patient hearer. And Mr. SOMERS too—

MR. SOMERS.

I can engage, in this instance, for passive obedience. And my lord, perhaps, does not insist on the full extent of his prerogative. It is fit, however, we attend with reverence, while such an advocate is pleading in such a cause.

BP. BURNET.

I was saying, that all your demands would be satisfied, as I went along in this discourse. It is true, an attentive reader of our history, who considers what is said of the mixed frame of our government, and the struggles that were occasioned by it, is surprised to find that these contentions at once subsided on the accession of the house of TUDOR; and that the tenour of the government thenceforth for many successions is as calm, and the popular influence as small, as in the most absolute and despotic forms. This appearance tempts him to conclude, that the crown had at length redeemed itself from a forced, unconstitutional servitude; and that, far from usurping on the people, it only returned to the exercise of its old and acknowledged rights. For otherwise it will be

DIALOGUE VI. said, how could the people at once become so insensible, and their representatives in parliament so tame, as to bear with the most imperious of their princes without reluctance; they, who had resented much smaller matters from the gentlest and the best?

But those, who talk in this strain, have not considered, that there were some circumstances in the state of things, from the time we are speaking of, that DISABLED the nation from insisting, and many more that INDISPOSED them to insist, on their ancient and undoubted rights.

I took notice, that the ruinous contentions of the two houses of YORK and LANCASTER, from which the nation was at last delivered by the accession of HENRY VII. disposed all men to submit with satisfaction to the new government. Such a conjuncture was favourable, of itself, to the increase of the regal power. But the truth is, there was little danger of any successful opposition to the crown, if the nation had been ever so ill inclined towards it. The great lords or barons were, in former days, both by the feudal constitution, and by the vast property they had in their hands, the proper and only check on the sovereign. These had been either cut off, or so far weakened, at

least by the preceding civil wars, that the danger seemed entirely over from that quarter. The politic king was aware of his advantage, and improved it to admiration. One may even affirm, that this was the sole object of his government.

For the greater security, and majesty of his person, he began with the institution of his LIFEGUARD. And having thus set out with enlarging his own train, his next care was to diminish that of his nobles. Hence the law, or rather laws (for, as Lord BACON observes, there was scarcely a parliament through his whole reign which passed without an act to that purpose) against RETAINERS. And with how jealous a severity he put those laws into execution, is sufficiently known from his treatment of one of his principal friends and servants, the earl of OXFORD [5].

It was also with a view to this depression of the nobility, that the court of STAR-CHAMBER was considered so much, and confirmed by act of parliament in his reign: "That which was principally aimed at by it being, as his historian frankly owns, FORCE, and the two chief

[5] The story is told by Lord BACON in his history of this prince.

DIALOGUE VI. supports of Force, COMBINATION OF MULTITUDES, and maintainance of HEADSHIP OF GREAT PERSONS."

To put them still lower in the public estimation, he affected to fill the great offices with churchmen only. And it was perhaps, as much to awe the nation by the terror of his prerogative as to fill his coffers, that he executed the penal laws with so merciless a rigour on the very greatest of his subjects.

Still further to prevent the possibility of a return, in any future period, of the patrician power, this politic prince provided with great care for the encouragement of trade, and the distribution of property. Both which ends were effected at once by that famous act, which was made to secure and facilitate the alienation of estates by fine and proclamation.

All these measures, we see, were evidently taken by the king to diminish the credit and suppress the influence of his nobles; and of consequence, as he thought, to exalt the power of the crown above control, if not in his own, yet in succeeding ages. And his policy had this effect for some time; though in the end it served, beside his expectation, to advance

another and more formidable power, at that time little suspected or even thought of, the POWER OF THE PEOPLE [h]. DIALOGUE VI.

The truth is, HENRY's policy was every way much assisted by the genius of the time. Trade was getting up: and Lollardism had secretly made its way into the hearts of the people. And, though *liberty* was in the end to reap the benefit of each, *prerogative* was the immediate gainer. Commerce, in proportion to its growth, brought on the decline of the feudal, that is, aristocratic power of the barons: and the authority of the church, that other check on the sovereign, was gradually weakened by the prevailing spirit of reformation.

Under these circumstances, HENRY found it no difficulty to depress his great lords; and he did it so effectually, that his son had little else left him to do, but to keep them down in that weak and disabled state, to which his father had reduced them. 'Tis true, both he and his successors went further. They never thought themselves secure enough from the resistance

h He did not consider that maxim of the Lord BACON, "Depression of the nobility may make a king more absolute, but less safe." Works, vol. iii. p. 296.

DIALOGUE VI. of their old enemies, the barons[i]; and so continued, by every method of artifice and rapine, to sink them much lower than even the safety of their own state required. But the effects of this management did not appear till long afterwards. For the present, the crown received a manifest advantage by this conduct.

There was, besides, another circumstance of great moment attending the government of the younger HENRY. He was the first heir of the white and red roses: so that there was now an end of all dispute and disaffection in the people. And they had so long and so violently contended about the title to the crown, that, when that mighty point was once settled, they did not readily apprehend that any other consideration deserved, or could justify, resistance to their sovereign.

With these advantages of situation, HENRY VIII. brought with him to the throne a spirit of that firm and steady temper as was exactly fitted to break the edge of any rising opposition. Besides the confidence of youth, he was of a

[i] And yet Lord BACON tells us, that when HENRY VIII. came to the crown, "There was no such thing as any great and mighty subject, who might any way eclipse or overshade the imperial power." Works, vol. iii. p. 508.

nature so elate and imperious, so resolved and fearless[k], that no resistance could succeed, hardly any thought of it could be entertained against him. The commons, who had hitherto been unused to treat with their kings but by the mediation of the great lords, being now pushed into the presence, were half discountenanced in the eye of majesty; and durst scarcely look up to the throne, much less dispute the prerogatives with which so awful a prince was thought to be invested. DIALOGUE VI.

And when the glaring abuse of his power, as in the exaltation of that great instrument of his tyranny, WOLSEY, seemed afterwards to provoke the people to some more vigorous resolutions, a singular event happened, which not only preserved his greatness, but brought a further increase to it. This was the famous rupture with the court of *Rome:* in consequence of which, the yoke of papal usurpations, that yoke under which our kings had groaned for so many ages, was in a moment broken off, and the crown restored to its full and perfect independency.

k "A man, as Mr. BACON characterises him, underneath many passions, but above fear." DISC. Part II. p. 120.

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Nor was this all. The throne did not only stand by itself, as having no longer a dependence on the papal chair. It rose still higher, and was, in effect, erected upon it. For the ecclesiastical jurisdiction was not annihilated, but transferred; and all the powers of the *Roman* pontiff now centered in the king's person. Henceforth then we are to regard him in a more awful point of view; as armed with both swords at once; and, as NAT. BACON expresses it in his way, as a strange kind of monster, "A king with a pope in his belly[1]."

The remainder of his reign shews that he was politic enough to make the best use of what his passions had brought on, and thus far accomplished. For though the nation wished, and, without doubt, hoped to go much further, the king's quarrel was rather with the court, than the church of *Rome*. And the high authority in spirituals, which he had gained, enabled him to hold all men, who either feared or desired a further reformation, in the most entire dependence.

In the mean time, the nation rejoiced with great reason at its deliverance from a foreign

[1] DISC. Part II. p. 125.

tyranny: and the lavish distribution of that wealth, which flowed into the king's coffers from the suppressed monasteries, procured a ready submission, from the great and powerful, to the king's domestic tyranny.

In a word, every thing contributed to the advancement of the regal power; and, in that, to the completion of the great designs of Providence. The amazing revolution, which had just happened, was, at all events, to be supported: and thus, partly by fear, and partly by interest, the parliament went along with the king, in all his projects; and, beyond the example of former times, was constantly obsequious to him, even in the most capricious and inconsistent measures of his government.

And thus matters, in a good degree, continued till the accession of Queen ELIZABETH. It is true, the weak administration of a minor king, and a disputed title at his death, occasioned some disorders. But the majesty of the crown itself was little impaired by these bustles; and it even acquired fresh glory on the head of our renowned Protestant princess.

For that astonishing work of reformation, so happily entered upon by HENRY, and car-

DIALOGUE VI.

ried on by his son, was after a short interruption (which only served to prove and animate the zeal of good men) brought at length by her to its final establishment. The intolerable abuses and shameless corruptions of popery were now so notorious to all the world, and the spirit of reformation, which had been secretly working since the days of WICKLIFF, had now spread itself so generally through the nation, that nothing but an entire renunciation of the doctrine and discipline of the church of *Rome* could be expected. And, by the happiest providence, the queen was as much obliged by the interest of her government and the security of her title, as by her own unshaken principles, to concur with the dispositions of her subjects.

Thus, in the end, Protestantism prevailed, and obtained a legal and fixed settlement. But to maintain it, when made, against the combined powers that threatened its destruction, the crown on which so much depended, was to be held up in all its splendor to the eyes of our own and foreign nations. Hence the height of prerogative in ELIZABETH's days, the submission of parliaments, and, I may almost say, the prostration of the people.

And when this magnanimous princess, as well by her vast spirit and personal virtues, as the constant successes of her long reign, had derived the highest dignity and authority on the *English* sceptre, it passed into the hands of the elder JAMES; who brought something more with him than a good will, the accession of a great kingdom, and the opinion of deep wisdom, to enable him to wield it.

What followed in his and the succeeding reigns, I need not be at the pains to recount to you. These things are too recent for me to dwell upon: and you, my Lord Commissioner, do not only remember them perfectly, but have yourself acted a great part in most of them. Allow me only to say, that from this brief history of the regal authority, and the means by which it arrived at so unusual a greatness, it is no wonder that the STUART family were somewhat dazzled by the height to which they were raised, and that more than half a century was required to correct, if it ever did correct, the high but false notions they had entertained of the imperial dignity.

SIR J. MAYNARD.

If you permit me, at last, to break in at the opening which this conclusion of your dis-

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course seems to give me; I would say, That, on your principles, the house of STUART had great reason for the high notions you ascribe to them. For what other conclusion could they make, but that a power, which had domineered for so long a time, and that by the full allowance of parliament and people, was, both in fact and right, absolute and uncontrolable?

BP. BURNET.

It is certain, the STUART family did draw that conclusion. But a great deal too hastily; as may appear from your own observation, that the exercise of this extraordinary power was committed, or more properly indulged to them, by the people. This is so strictly true, that from the first to the last of the TUDOR line, imperious and despotic as they were of their own nature, no extraordinary stretch of power was ventured upon by any of them, but under the countenance and protection of an act of parliament. Hence it was, that the STAR-CHAMBER, though the jurisdiction of this court had the authority of the common law, was confirmed by statute; that the proceedings of EMPSON and DUDLEY had the sanction of parliament; that HENRY the VIIIth's supremacy, and all acts of power dependent upon it,

had the same foundation: in a word, that every thing, which wore the face of an absolute authority in the king, was not in virtue of any supposed inherent prerogative in the crown, but the special grant of the subject. No doubt, this compliance, and particularly if we consider the lengths to which it was carried, may be brought to prove the obsequious and even abject dispositions of the times; though we allow a great deal, as I think we should, to prudence and good policy. But then the parliaments, by taking care to make every addition to the crown their OWN PROPER ACT, left their kings no pretence to consider themselves as absolute and independent. DIALOGUE VI.

MR. SOMERS.

I doubt, considering the slavish disposition of the times, that, if the people still possessed a shew of liberty, this advantage was owing to the pure condescension of the crown, and not to their own policy. A king that could obtain of his parliament to have his proclamations pass for laws[m], might have ventured on this step without the concurrence of parliament.

[m] This terrible act is 31 HEN. VIII. c. 8. It was repealed in 1 EDW. VI. c. 12.

ALOGUE
VI.

BP. BURNET.

I acknowledge the act you glance
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legislative authority into the hands
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the parliament's bestowing it.
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was said well of this king—"That he spake peace
d, and sung lullaby at home: yet, like a dead calm
hot spring, treasured up in store sad distempers
ainst a back-winter." NAT. BACON.

DIALOGUE VI.

land, by the memory of his former subjection, or servitude rather, to the imperious church of *Scotland*. But this was not all. Succeeding to so fair a patrimony as that of a mighty kingdom, where little or no opposition had been made for some reigns to the will of the sovereign; to a kingdom too, securely settled in the possession of its favoured religion, which had occasioned all the dangers, and produced all the condescension, of the preceding princes; bringing, besides, with him to the succession, an undisputed title and the additional splendor of another crown; all these advantages meeting in his person at that point of time, he ventured to give way to his natural love of dominion, and told the people to their face, that the pretended rights of their parliaments were but the free gifts and graces of their kings: that every high point of government, that is, every point which he chose to call by that name, was wrapt up in the awful mystery of his prerogative: and, in a word, that "it was sedition for them to dispute what a king may do in the height of his power[n]."

Such, you know, was the language, the public language to his parliaments, of JAMES

[n] Speech to the lords and commons at *Whitehall*. An. 1609.

THE FIRST. But these pretences, which might have been suffered perhaps, or could not have been opposed, under the TUDOR line, were unluckily out of season, and would not pass on a people who knew their own rights, had saved to themselves the exercise of them, and came now at length to feel and understand their importance. For, as I before observed, the principal cause that had lifted the crown so high, was the depression of the barons. The great property which had made them so formidable, was dispersed into other hands. The nobility were therefore too low to give any umbrage to the crown. But the commons were rising apace; and in a century had grown to that height, that on the accession of the *Scotch* family, the point of time when the new king dreamed of nothing but absolute sovereignty[o], they were now in a condition to assert the public liberty, and, as the event shewed but too soon, to snatch the sceptre itself out of their king's hands. DIALOGUE VI.

However, in that interval of the dormant power of the commons it was, that the prero-

[o] It was said well of this king—"That he spake peace abroad, and sung lullaby at home: yet, like a dead calm in a hot spring, treasured up in store sad distempers against a back-winter." NAT. BACON.

DIALOGUE VI.

gative made the largest shoots, till in the end it threatened to overshadow law and liberty. And, though the general reason is to be sought in the humiliation of the church, the low estate of the barons, and the unexerted, because as yet unfelt, greatness of the commons, the solution will be defective if we stop here. For the regal authority, so limited by the ancient constitution, and by the continued use of parliaments, could never in this short space have advanced itself beyond all bounds, if other reasons had not co-operated with the state of the people; if some more powerful and special causes had not conspired to throw round the person of the sovereign those rays of sacred opinion, which are the real strength as well as gilding of a crown.

Of these I have occasionally mentioned several; such as "the personal character and virtues of the princes themselves; the high adventurous designs in which they were engaged; the interest, the people found or promised to themselves in supporting their power; the constant successes of their administration; and the unremitting spirit and vigour with which it was carried on and maintained." All these considerations could not but dispose the people to look up with reverence to a crown,

which presented nothing to their view but what was fitted to take their admiration, or imprint esteem. Yet all these had failed of procuring to majesty that profound submission which was paid to it, or of elevating the prince to that high conceit of independency which so thoroughly possessed the imagination of King JAMES, if an event of a very singular nature, and big with important consequences, had not given the proper occasion to both.

SIR J. MAYNARD.

I understand you to mean the overthrow of the papal dominion, which had so long eclipsed the majesty of our kings; and held them in a state of vassalage, not only to the triple crown, but, which was more disgraceful, to the mitre of their own subjects.

BP. BURNET.

Rather understand me to mean, what was indeed the consequence of that event, THE TRANSLATION OF THE POPE'S SUPREMACY TO THE KING. This, as I take it, was the circumstance of all others which most favoured

DIALOGUE VI. the sudden growth of the imperial power in this nation. And because I do not remember to have seen it enlarged upon as it deserves, give me leave to open to you, somewhat copiously, the nature of this newly-acquired headship, and the numerous advantages which the prerogative received from it.

The PAPAL SUPREMACY, as it had been claimed and exercised in this kingdom, was a power of the highest nature. It controlled every rank and order in the state, and, in effect, laid the prince and people together at the mercy of the *Roman* pontif. There is no need to recount the several branches of this usurped authority. It is enough to say, that it was transcendant in all respects that could in any sense be taken to concern religion. And who, that has looked into the papal story, needs be told that, by a latitude of interpretation, every thing was construed to be a religious concern, by which the pope's power or interest could be affected?

Under the acknowledgment then of this super-eminent dominion, no steps could possibly be taken towards the reformation of religion, or even the assertion of the just rights and privileges of the crown. But the people

were grown to have as great a zeal for the former of these considerations, as the king for the latter. And in this juncture it was, that HENRY, in a sudden heat, threw off the supremacy; which the parliament, to prevent its return to the pope, very readily invested in the king. DIALOGUE VI.

There was something so daring, and, according to the prejudices of that time, so presumptuous and even prophane, in this attempt to transfer the spiritual headship to a secular power, that the pope himself little apprehended, and nothing but the king's dauntless temper could have assured, the success of it. The repugnancy which the parliament themselves found in their own notions betwixt the exercise of the spiritual and temporal power, was the reason perhaps for inserting in the act of supremacy those qualifying clauses, we find in it P.

P Meaning such clauses as these—*as by any spiritual or ecclesiastical power or authority may* LAWFULLY *be exercised*, and, *provided that nothing be done contrary to the* LAWS *of this realm.*

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MR. SOMERS.

It is possible, as you say, that the parliament might be at a loss to adjust in their own minds the precise bounds of the spiritual jurisdiction, as united to the civil, in the king's person. Yet, in virtue of these clauses, the regal supremacy was, in fact, restrained and limited by act of parliament: and the import of them was clearly to assert the independency of the crown on any foreign judicature, and not to confer it in the extent in which it was claimed and exercised by the see of *Rome*.

BP. BURNET.

It is true, that no more was expressed, or perhaps intended, in this act. But the question is, how the matter was understood by the people at large, and in particular by the king himself and his flatterers. Now it seems to me that this transfer of the supremacy would be taken for a solemn acknowledgment, not only of the ancient encroachments and usurpations of the papacy, but of the king's right to succeed to all the powers of it. And I conclude this from the nature of the thing itself,

from the current notions of the time, and from the sequel of the king's government.

If we attend to the nature of the complaints which the kingdom was perpetually making, in the days of popery, of the *Roman* usurpations, we shall find that they did not so much respect these usurpations themselves, as the person claiming and enjoying them. The grievance was, that appeals should be made to *Rome*; that provisions should come from thence; in a word, that all causes should be carried to a foreign tribunal, and that such powers should be exercised over the subjects of this realm by a foreign jurisdiction. The complaint was, that the pope exercised these powers; and not that the powers themselves were exercised. So, on the abolition of this supremacy, the act that placed it in the person of the king, would naturally be taken to transfer upon him all the privileges and pre-eminencies, which had formerly belonged to it. And thus, though the act was so properly drawn as to make a difference in the two cases, yet the people at large, and much more the king himself, would infer from the concession, "that the pope had usurped his powers on the crown;" that therefore the crown had now a right to those powers. And the circumstance of this

DIALOGUE VI. translation's passing by act of parliament, does not alter the matter much, with regard to the king's notion of it. For in that time of danger, and for the greater security of his new power, he would chuse to have that ratified and confirmed by statute, which he firmly believed inherent in his person and dignity.

Then, to see how far the current opinions of that time were favourable to the extension of the regal authority, on this alliance with the papal, we are to reflect, that, however odious the administration of the pope's supremacy was become, most men had very high notions of the plenitude of his power, and the sacredness of his person. "CHRIST'S vicar upon earth" was an awful title, and had sunk deep into the astonished minds of the people. And though HENRY'S pretensions went no further than to assume that vicarial authority within his own kingdom, yet this limitation would not hinder them from conceiving of him, much in the same way as of the pope himself. They, perhaps, had seen no difference, but for his want of the pope's *sacerdotal* capacity. Yet even this defect was, in some measure[q], made up

[q] The bishop does well to say—*in some measure*. For, according to popish prejudices, the sacerdotal character is vastly above the regal. See POLE'S address to HEN. VIII. l. 1, where this high point is discussed at large.

to him by his *regal*. So that between the majesty of the kingly character, and the consecration of his person by this mysterious endowment of the spiritual, it is easy to see how well prepared the minds of men were, to allow him the exercise of any authority to which he pretended. DIALOGUE VI.

And to what degree this spiritual character of head of the church operated in the minds of the people, we may understand from the language of men in still later times, and even from the articles of our church, where the prerogative of the crown is said to be that which GODLY KINGS have always exercised: intimating that this plenitude of power was inherent in the king, on account of that *spiritual and religious* character, with which, as head of the church, he was necessarily invested. The illusion, as gross as we may now think it, was but the same as that which blinded the eyes of the greatest and wisest people in the old world. For was it not just in the same manner, that by the policy of the *Roman* emperors in assuming the office of *pontifex maximus*, that is, incorporating the religious with their civil character, not only their authority became the more awful, but their *persons* sacred?

DIALOGUE VI.

We see then, as I said, how conveniently the minds of men were prepared to acquiesce in HENRY's usurped prerogative. And it is well known that this prince was not of a temper to balk their expectations. The sequel of his reign shews that he took himself to be invested with the whole ecclesiastical power, legislative as well as executive; nay, that he was willing to extend his acknowledged right of supremacy even to the ancient papal infallibility, as appears from his sovereign decisions in all matters of faith and doctrine. It is true the parliament was ready enough to go before, or at least to follow, the head of the church in all these decisions. But the reason is obvious. And I need not repeat to you in what light the king regarded their compliance with him.

MR. SOMERS.

It is very likely, for these reasons, that the king would draw to himself much authority and reverence, at least, from his new title of supremacy. But it does not, I think, appear that the supremacy had all that effect on the people's rights and the ancient constitution, which your lordship's argument requires you to ascribe to it.

BP. BURNET.

I brought these general considerations only to shew the reverend opinion which of course would be entertained of this mixt person, THE SUPREME HEAD OF THE CHURCH, compounded of a king and a pope; and how natural a foundation it was for the superstructure of despotic power in all its branches. But I now hasten to the particulars which demonstrate that this use was actually made of that title.

And, first, let me observe, that it gave birth to that great and formidable court of the HIGH-COMMISSION; which brought so mighty an accession of power to the crown, that, as experience afterwards shewed, no security could be had for the people's liberties, till it was totally abolished. The necessity of the times was a good plea for the first institution of so dangerous a tribunal. The restless endeavours of papists and puritans against the ecclesiastical establishment gave a colour for the continuance of it. But, as all matters that regarded religion or conscience were subjected to its sole cognizance and inspection, it was presently seen how wide an entrance it gave to the most tyrannical usurpations.

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It was, further, natural that the king's power in civil causes should keep pace with his authority in spiritual. And, fortunately for the advancement of his prerogative, there was already erected within the kingdom another court of the like dangerous nature, of ancient date, and venerable estimation, under the name of the court of STAR-CHAMBER; which brought every thing under the direction of the crown that could not so properly be determined in the high-commission. These were the two arms of absolute dominion; which, at different times, and under different pretences, were stretched forth to the oppression of every man that presumed to oppose himself to the royal will or pleasure. The star-chamber had been kept, in former times, within some tolerable bounds; but the high and arbitrary proceedings of the other court, which were found convenient for the further purpose of reformation, and were therefore constantly exercised, and as constantly connived at by the parliament, gave an easy pretence for advancing the star-chamber's jurisdiction so far, that in the end its tyranny was equally intolerable as that of the high-commission.

Thus the king's authority in all cases, spiritual and temporal, was fully established, and

in the highest sense of which the words are capable. Our kings themselves so understood it; and when afterwards their parliaments shewed a disposition to interfere in any thing relating either to church or state, they were presently reprimanded; and sternly required not to meddle with what concerned their prerogative royal and their high points of government. Instances of this sort were very frequent in ELIZABETH's reign, when the commons were getting up, and the spirit of liberty began to exert itself in that assembly. The meaning of all this mysterious language was, that the royal pleasure was subject to no control, but was to be left to take its free course under the sanction of these two supreme courts, to which the cognizance of all great matters was committed.

This, one would think, were sufficient to satisfy the ambition of our kings. But they went further, and still under the wing of their beloved supremacy.

The parliament were not so tame, or the king's grace did not require it of them, to divest themselves entirely, though it was much checked and restrained by these courts, of their legislative capacity. But the crown found a way to ease itself of this curb, if at any time it

DIALOGUE VI.

should prove troublesome to it. This was by means of the DISPENSING POWER; which, in effect, vacated all laws at once, further than it pleased the king to countenance and allow them. And for so enormous a stretch of power (which, being rarely exercised, was the less minded) there was a ready pretence from the papal privileges and pre-eminencies to which the crown had succeeded. For this most invidious of all the claims of prerogative had been indisputable in the church; and it had been nibbled at by some of our kings, in former times, from the contagious authority of the pope's example, even without the pretence which the supremacy in spirituals now gave for it.

The exercise of this power, in the popes themselves, was thought so monstrous, that MATTHEW PARIS honestly complains of it in his time, as *extinguishing all justice*—EXTINGUIT OMNEM JUSTICIAM [r]. And on another occasion, I remember, he goes so far, in a spirit of prophecy, almost, as to tell us the ill use that hereafter kings themselves might be tempted to make of it [s]. His prediction was verified very soon: for HENRY III. learned this

[r] HIST. ANG. p. 694.

[s] Something to this purpose occurs in p. 706.

lesson of tyranny, and put it in practice. On which occasion one of his upright judges could not help exclaiming, CIVILIS CURIA EXEMPLO ECCLESIASTICÆ CONQUINATUR [t]. And afterwards, we know, HENRY VII. claimed and exercised this dispensing power in the case of sheriffs, contrary to act of parliament [u]. It was early indeed in his reign, and when the state of his affairs was thought to give a colour to it. DIALOGUE VI.

I mention these things to shew, that since the pope's example had been so infectious in former times, it would now be followed very resolutely, when the translation of the very supremacy, from which it had sprung, seemed

[t] The name of this reverend judge was ROGER DE THURKEBY. A cause was trying before him in *Westminster-hall,* when one of the parties produced the king's letters patent with a *non-obstante* in it. "Quod cum comperisset," says the historian, "ab alto ducens suspiria, de prædictæ adjectionis appositione, dixit; Heu, heu, hos ut quid dies expectavimus? ecce jam civilis curia exemplo ecclesiasticæ conquinatur, et a sulphureo fonte rivulus intoxicatur." p. 784. HEN. III.

[u] Many statutes, and especially 23 HEN. VI. had forbidden the continuance of any person in the office of sheriff for more than one year. HENRY VII. dispensed with these statutes. And the twelve judges resolved in 2 HEN. VII. that, by a *non-obstante,* a patent for a longer time should be good.—It seems, the good old race of the THURKEBYS was now worn out.

DIALOGUE VI.

to justify it. And we have a remarkable instance in ELIZABETH's reign, by which it may appear that this prerogative was publickly and solemnly avowed. For upon some scandal taken by the popish party upon pretence that the book of consecration of bishops was not established by law, the queen made no scruple to declare by her letters-patent, that she had, by her supreme authority, dispensed with all causes or doubts of any imperfection or disability in the persons of the bishops. My learned friend, Dr. STILLINGFLEET, in commenting this case, acknowledges the very truth. "It was customary," says he, "in the pope's bulls, to put in such kind of clauses; and therefore she would omit no power in that case to which the pope had pretended[x]."

And it is in this dispensing spirit that JAMES I, having delivered it for a maxim of state, "that the king is above law," goes on to affirm, in one of his favourite works, that general laws, made publickly in parliament, may, upon known respects to the king, by his authority be mitigated and SUSPENDED upon causes only known to him[y].

[x] See his Works, vol. iii. p. 806.

[y] *The true law of free monarchies*, in the King's Works, p. 203.

We perceive the ground of that claim, which was carried so high by the princes of the house of STUART, and, as we have just seen, brought on the ruin of the last of them. And to how great a degree this prerogative of the dispensing power had at length possessed the minds even of the common lawyers, (partly from some scattered examples of it in former times, and partly from reasons of expediency in certain junctures, but principally from the inveteracy of this notion of the papal supremacy) we had an alarming proof in HALE's case, when eleven out of the twelve judges declared for it.

SIR J. MAYNARD.

Your lordship has indeed shewn that the poison of the papal supremacy began to work very fatally. If this blessed revolution had not happened, what could have been expected but that the next step would be, to set the crown above all divine as well as human law? And methinks, after such a judgment in *Westminster-Hall,* it could not be surprising if another set of men had served the king, in the office of the pope's janissaries, and maintained his right

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of dispensing with the gospel itself[z], as well as the statute-book.

MR. SOMERS.

I must needs think, Sir JOHN, you are a little severe, not to say unjust, in this insinuation; for which the churchmen of our days have surely given you no reason. And as for the reverend judges, methinks my lord of *Salisbury* might be allowed to expose their determination, at the same time that he so candidly accounts for it.

BP. BURNET.

I perceive, my Lord Commissioner, with all his goodness and moderation, is a little apt to surmise the worst of our order. But I will try to reconcile him to it; and it shall be in the way he most likes, by making a frank confession of our infirmities.

[z] Alluding to the doctrine of the canonists, who say, *Papa dispensare potest de omnibus præceptis* VETERIS ET NOVI TESTAMENTI. See *bishop* JEWELL's *defence of his apology of the church of England, against* HARDING, p. 313.

For another source of the regal dominion in latter times, and still springing from out of the rock of supremacy (which followed and succoured the court-prerogative, wherever it went, just as the rock of MOSES, the *Rabbins* say, journeyed with the *Jewish* camp, and refreshed it in all its stations) was the opinion taken up and propagated by churchmen, from the earliest æra of the Reformation, concerning the irresistible power of kings, and the PASSIVE OBEDIENCE that is due to it.

SIR J. MAYNARD.

Aye, there it is, I am afraid, that we are principally to look for the origin of the high pretences of our kings to absolute government.

BP. BURNET.

I shall dissemble no part of the clergy's blame on this occasion; and there is the less need, if I were ever so tender of their reputation, as their inducements to preach up this doctrine were neither slight in themselves, nor unfriendly to the public interest.

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It cannot be doubted that the churchmen especially, both by interest and principle, would be closely connected with the new head of the church. Their former subjection in spirituals to the papal authority would of itself create a prejudice in favour of it, as now residing in the king's person. And the disposal of bishopricks and other great preferments being now entirely in the crown, they would of course, you will say, be much addicted to his service.

But these were not the sole, or even the principal, reasons that induced so wise and so disinterested persons, as our first reformers, to exalt the royal prerogative. They were led into this pernicious practice by the most excusable of all motives, in their situation, an immoderate zeal against popery.

It is true, a very natural prejudice mixed itself with their other reasonings. "The crown had been declared supreme, and to have chief government of all estates of this realm, and in all causes." And, though this declaration was levelled only against the pretensions of every foreign, and particularly the papal power, yet, the clergy were given to conceive of it as a general proposition. The reason was, that the

people, from whom the just right of supremacy is derived, having, at this juncture, not yet attained the consideration, which the nobles had lost, they forwardly concluded, that if the royal estate were independent of the pope, it was unquestionably so of every other power. They could not, on the sudden, be brought to think so reverendly of the poor people, even in their representatives, as to allow that they had any pretension to restrain their sovereign. DIALOGUE VI.

SIR J. MAYNARD.

I could swear to the truth of this account. One of the popes, I forget which, is said to have called the deputies of the third estate in *France*, on a certain occasion, NEBULONES EX FÆCE PLEBIS[a]. And though that might not be the language of churchmen in England, at this time, it was not far, perhaps, from expressing their sentiments. It is certain, they soon taught their princes, who put themselves to school to the hierarchy[b], to talk in this

[a] See this particular taken notice of in K. JAMES's Works, p. 394.

[b] One of them, King JAMES, profited so well by this discipline, that, as we are told on very competent authority, "He was the most able prince that ever this king-

DIALOGUE VI. strain; as appears from many of ELIZABETH's and JAMES's speeches to the commons.

BP. BURNET.

Something of this sort, I grant you, but not in the degree you put it, might have an influence on the political reasonings of the clergy. But their zeal for reformation was what prevailed with them most, and carried them furthest into these notions. It is something curious to see how this happened.

HENRY's usurpation of the supremacy, as it was called at *Rome*, appeared so prodigious a crime to all good Catholics, that no severities were great enough to inflict upon him for it. Their writers proceeded to strange lengths. Even our cardinal POLE so far forgot the greatness of his quality, and the natural mildness of his temper, as to exceed the bounds of decency, in his invectives against him. And when afterwards, in right of this assumed headship, the crown went so far as to reject the authority of the church as well as court of

dom had, to JUDGE OF CHURCH-WORK." *Ded. of Bp.* ANDREWS's *sermons to* CHARLES I. *by the bishops* LAUD *and* BUCKERIDGE.

Rome, all the thunders of the Vatican were employed against this invader of the church's prerogative. The pope, in his extreme indignation, threatened to depose EDWARD. He did put his threat in execution against ELIZABETH. Yet, in spite of religious prejudices, this was esteemed so monstrous a stretch of power, and so odious to all Christian princes, that the jesuits thought it expedient, by all means, to soften the appearance of it. One of their contrivances was, by searching into the origin of civil power; which they brought rightly, though for this wicked purpose, from the people. For they concluded, that, if the regal power could be shewn to have no divine right, but to be of human and even popular institution, the liberty, which the pope took in deposing kings, would be less invidious. Thus the jesuits reasoned on the matter. The argument was pushed with great vigour by HARDING and his brethren in ELIZABETH's reign, but afterwards with more learning and address by BELLARMINE, MARIANA, and others[c].

To combat this dangerous position, so prejudicial to the power of kings, and which was

[c] This notion was started even so early as HENRY's rejection of the supremacy. Cardinal POLE insists strongly on this origin of kingship in his book, *Pro ecclesiasticæ unitatis defensione*, lib. i. p. 74.

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meant to justify all attempts of violence on the lives of heretical princes, the Protestant divines went into the other extreme; and, to save the person of their sovereign, preached up the doctrine of DIVINE RIGHT. HOOKER, superior to every prejudice, followed the truth. But the rest of our reforming and reformed divines stuck to the other opinion; which, as appears from the HOMILIES, the INSTITUTION OF A CHRISTIAN MAN, and the general stream of writings in those days, became the opinion of the church, and was indeed the received Protestant doctrine.

And thus unhappily arose in the church of England that pernicious system of divine indefeasible right of kings: broached indeed by the clergy, but not from those corrupt and temporizing views to which it has been imputed. The authority of those venerable men, from whom it was derived, gave it a firm and lasting hold on the minds of the clergy: And being thought to receive a countenance from the general terms, in which obedience to the civil magistrate is ordained in scripture, it has continued to our days, and may, it is feared, still continue, to perplex and mislead the judgments of too many amongst us.

Yet it could hardly have kept its ground against so much light and evidence as has been thrown at different times on this subject[d], but for an unlucky circumstance attending the days of reformation. This was, the growth of puritanism and the republican spirit; which, in order to justify its attack on the legal constitutional rights of the crown, adopted the very same principles with the jesuited party. And under these circumstances it is not to be thought strange that a principle, however true, which was disgraced by coming through such hands, should be generally condemned and execrated. The crown and mitre had reason to look upon both these sorts of men as their mortal enemies. What wonder then they should unite in reprobating the political tenets, on which their common enmity was justified and supported? DIALOGUE VI.

This I take to be the true account of what the friends of liberty so often object to us, "That the despotism of our later princes has "been owing to the slavish doctrines of the "clergy." The charge, so far as there is any

[d] In the writings, published by political men for twenty years together before the Restoration; in which the great question of the origin of civil government was thoroughly canvassed.

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colour for it, is not denied: and yet I should hope to see it urged against us with less acrimony, if it were once understood on what grounds these doctrines were taken up, and for what purposes they were maintained by the clergy.

MR. SOMERS.

Besides the candour of this acknowledgment, the part, which our clergy have lately acted, is, methinks, enough to abate and correct those hard sentiments, which, as you say, have been entertained against them.

SIR J. MAYNARD.

This apology seems indeed the best that can be made for them. But when one considers the baleful tendency of those doctrines, which were calculated to enslave the very souls and consciences of men, and by advancing princes into the rank of gods, to abet and justify their tyranny, one cannot help feeling a strong resentment against the teachers of them, however they might themselves be imposed upon by several colourable pretences. Your lordship knows, I might proceed to further and still harder reflexions. But I have no pretence

to indulge in them at this time, when a bishop is pleading so warmly in the cause of liberty. DIALOGUE VI.

BP. BURNET.

This tenderness to your friends, Sir JOHN, is very obliging. But I would willingly engage your candour, in behalf of our order. Let me presume, for such a purpose, to second Mr. SOMERS's observation, "That the English "clergy have at length atoned, in some mea-"sure, for former miscarriages."

SIR J. MAYNARD.

By their behaviour in a late critical conjuncture: and yet, to speak my mind frankly, the merit of their services, even on that occasion, is a little equivocal, when one reflects how unwilling they seemed to take the alarm, till they were roused, at length, by their own immediate object, the church's danger!

BP. BURNET.

And can you wonder that what concerned them most, what they best understood, and was their proper and peculiar charge, should

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engage their principal attention? Besides, they went on principle, and with reason too, in supposing that no slight or partial breaches of law were sufficient to authorise resistance to the magistrate[e]. But when a general attack was made upon it, and the dispensing power was set up in defiance of all law, and to manifest the subversion of the constitution, the clergy were then as forward as any others to signalize themselves in the common cause of liberty.

SIR J. MAYNARD.

Their old favourite doctrine of *non-resistance* was, I doubt, at the bottom of this cautious proceeding. But it was high time for them to lay it aside, when they saw it employed as the ready way for the introduction of that popery, which, as you say, it was its first intention to keep out.

BP. BURNET.

It certainly was.—But, not to pursue this argument any further, let me return to the

[e] The bishop declares his opinion to this purpose very fully in several places of the History of his Own Times. His and his friend TILLOTSON's representations to the unhappy Lord RUSSELL, no doubt, turned upon this principle.

main point I had in view, which was, "to "account for the growth of the regal power "from the influence of the transferred supre- "macy." There is still another instance behind, which shews how well our princes understood the advantage they had gained, and how dextrously they improved it. DIALOGUE VI.

It seems prodigious, at first sight, that when the yoke of *Rome* was thrown off, the new church, erected in opposition to it, should still continue to be governed by the laws of the old. The pretence was, that this was only by way of interim, till a body of ecclesiastical laws could be formed; and, to cover this pretence the better, some steps were, in fact, taken towards the execution of such a design. But the meaning of the crown certainly was, to uphold its darling supremacy, even on the old footing of the CANON LAWS.

This conclusion seems probable, if one considers that those canons proceeded from an absolute spiritual monarch, and had a perpetual reference to his dominion; that they were formed upon the very genius, and did acknowledge the authority of the civil laws, the proper issue, as my Lord Commissioner has shewn us, of civil despotism. Whoever, I say,

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considers all this, will be inclined to think that the crown contrived this interim from the use the canon law was of to the extension of the prerogative. Accordingly it is certain, that the succeeding monarchs, ELIZABETH, JAMES, and CHARLES, would never suffer us to have a body of ecclesiastical laws, from a sense of this utility in the old ones; and a consciousness, if ever they should submit a body of new laws to the legislature, that the parliament would form them altogether in the genius of a free church and state[e]; and perhaps would be for assuming a share in their darling supremacy itself.

With those canon laws, and for the same purpose, as was observed to us, these princes retained a great affection for the interpreters of them, the canon and civil lawyers; till the genius of liberty rising and prevailing in the end, over all the attempts of civil despotism, both the one and the other fell into gradual desuetude and contempt: and as the canonists were little regarded, so their law is now considered no further than as it is countenanced and supported by the law of *England*.

[e] The bishop gives the same account of this matter in his History of the Reformation, Part I. p. 330.

But to see how convenient the doctrine of the canon law was for the maintenance of an absolute supremacy, it needs only be observed to you, that one of these canons is, "That it "is not lawful for any man to dispute of the "pope's power." And to see how exactly our kings were disposed to act upon it, one needs only recollect that immortal apophthegm of the elder JAMES, already taken notice of, "That it "is sedition for the subject to dispute what a "king may do in the height of his power."

And as the canon laws are the pope's laws, so we are told, on the same supreme authority, that the *English* laws are the king's. For thus on another occasion his majesty expresses himself.—"Although a just prince" (I believe I repeat his very words) "will not take the life "of any of his subjects without a clear law: "yet the same laws, whereby he taketh them, "are made by himself, or his predecessors; "and so the power flows always from himself." —And again, "Although a good king will "frame all his actions to be according to the "law, yet is he not bound thereto but of his "good will, and for good example giving to "his subjects[f]."

[f] TRUE LAW OF FREE MONARCHIES, p. 203.—What is said of the king's being the *great schoolmaster of the land*

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Thus decreed that *great school-master of the whole land* (to give his majesty no harder a title than he was pleased to give himself); and it is difficult to say whence his supremacy extracted this golden rule of *free monarchies,* if not from the pope's own code of imperial canons.

Thus it appears what misconceptions arose, and what strange conclusions were drawn, from the king's supremacy in spirituals. One might proceed further in contemplation of this subject; but I have wearied you too much already. You will see from these several particulars how it came to pass that the REFORMATION, which was founded on the principles of liberty and supported by them, was yet for some time the cause of strengthening the power of the crown. For though the exercise of private judgment, which was essential to Protestantism, could not but tend to produce right notions of civil liberty, as well as of religious faith and discipline, and so in the end was fated to bring

is taken from the same discourse, p. 204. His words are these—"The people of a borough cannot displace their "provost—yea, even the poor school-master cannot be "displaced by his scholars—How much less it is lawful "upon any pretext to control or displace the great provost "and GREAT SCHOOL-MASTER OF THE WHOLE LAND."

about a just form of free government (as after some struggles and commotions, we see, it has happened), yet the translation of supremacy from the pope to the civil magistrate brought with it a mighty accession of authority, which had very sensible effects for several reigns afterwards. The mysterious sacredness and almost divinity which had lodged in the pope's person, was now inshrined in the king's; and it is not wonderful that the people should find their imaginations strongly affected by this notion. And with this general preparation, it followed very naturally, that, in the several ways here recounted, the crown should be disposed and enabled to extend its prerogative, till another change in the government was required to limit and circumscribe it, almost as great as that of the Reformation. DIALOGUE VI.

MR. SOMERS.

I have listened with much pleasure to this deduction which your lordship has made from that important circumstance of the crown's supremacy in spirituals. I think it throws great light on the subject under consideration, and accounts in a clear manner for that appearance of despotism which the *English* government

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has worn from the times of reformation. I have only one difficulty remaining with me: but it is such an one as seems to bear hard on the great hypothesis itself, so learnedly maintained by my Lord Commissioner in our late conversation, of the original free constitution of the *English* government. For, allowing all you say to be true, does not the very translation of the pope's supremacy to the king, considered in itself, demonstrate that we had then, at least, no free constitution at all, to be invaded by the high claims of that prerogative? If we admit the existence of any such, the supremacy of the church should, naturally, I think, have devolved upon the supreme civil power; which with us, according to the present supposition, is in the three estates of the legislature. But this devolution, it seems, was on the king alone; a public acknowledgment, as I take it, that the constitution of the government was at that time conceived to be, in the highest sense of the word, absolutely MONARCHICAL.

BP. BURNET.

I was not, I confess, aware of this objection to our theory, which is very specious. Yet it may be sufficient, as I suppose, to reply to it,

that the work of reformation was carried on and established by the whole legislature; and that the supremacy, in particular, though it of right belonged to the three estates, was by free consent surrendered and given up into the hands of the king. It is certain this power, though talked of as the ancient right of the crown, was solemnly invested in it by act of parliament.

SIR J. MAYNARD.

There may be something in this. Yet your lordship, I think, does not carry the matter quite far enough; and, with your leave, I will presume to give another, and perhaps the truer, answer to Mr. SOMERS's difficulty. The subject is a little nice, but I have not those scruples which may reasonably be conceived to restrain your lordship from enlarging upon it.

I reply then directly, and without softening matters, that this irregular translation of the supremacy is no proof that there was not then a FREE CONSTITUTION, with a legitimate power in it, to which the supremacy belonged. And my reason, without offence to my lord of *Salisbury*, is this. When the papal authority was abolished, and the question came into parlia-

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ment, "who now became the head of the "church;" the search after him was not carried, where it should have been, into the constitution of the kingdom; but, as it was a matter of religion, they mistook that, which was only an affair of church discipline, to be a doctrine of theology; and so searched, for a solution of the question, in the New Testament, and Ecclesiastical History. In the New Testament, obedience is pressed to the person of Cæsar, because an absolute monarchy was the only government in being: and, for the same reason, when afterwards the empire became Christian, the supremacy, as we know from *ecclesiastical story*, was assumed by the emperor: just as it would have been by the consul and senate, had the republic existed. Hence our Reformers, going altogether by spiritual and ecclesiastical example, and hoping thereby to preserve their credit against the reproaches of *Rome*, which, as your lordship knows, was perpetually charging them with novelties and innovations in both respects, recurred to early antiquity for that rule.

This attention to ecclesiastical example was, I suppose, a consideration of convenience with the wise fathers of our church: the other appeal to the Gospel, might be a matter of con-

science with them. And thus by force of one text, ill-understood, *render unto* CÆSAR *the things which are* CÆSAR'S, they put the spiritual sword into the king's hands; just as by another, *he beareth not the sword in vain* (for I know of no better authority), the temporal sword had also been committed to his care. DIALOGUE VI.

MR. SOMERS.

This last intimation, I am apprehensive, would bear a further debate[5]. But I acquiesce in your answer to my particular question; I mean, unless the bishop of *Salisbury* warns me against submitting to so heretical a doctor.

BP. BURNET.

My Lord Commissioner chuses to let slip no opportunity of exposing what he takes to be an error in ecclesiastical management. Either way, however, I am not displeased to find that

[5] Mr. SOMERS had reason for saying this; for the intimation was no less than that the power of the *militia* was not in the king. Sir J. MAYNARD was of this opinion, when the matter was debated in parliament in 1642. See WHITLOCK, p. 56.

DIALOGUE VI. his main thesis keeps its ground; and that, even according to his own account of the matter, the nation, when it gave up the supremacy to the king, was in possession of a free and legal constitution.

On the whole, you give me leave then to presume that the considerations, now offered to you, afford a reasonable account of that despotic form under which the *English* government has appeared, from the union of the two roses down to the subversion of the constitution in CHARLES the First's time.

Other causes concurred; but the Reformation was the chief prop and pillar of the imperial dignity, while the constitution itself remained the same, or rather was continually gaining strength even by the necessary operation of those principles on which the Reformation was founded. Religious liberty made way for the entertainment of civil, in all its branches. It could not be otherwise. It disposed the minds of men to throw off that sluggishness, in which they had slumbered for many ages. A spirit of inquiry prevailed. Inveterate errors were seen through; and prejudices of all sorts fell off, in proportion to the growth of letters, and the progress of reason.

The increasing trade and wealth of the nation concurred with the temper of the times. The circulation of property brought on a natural relaxation of the feudal system. The plan of liberty was extended and enlarged; and the balance of power soon fell into the hands of the people. This appeared very plainly from the influence of parliaments, and the daring attacks of many particular members on the highest and most favoured claims of prerogative. Our kings were sensible of the alteration: but, instead of prudently giving way to it, they flew into the opposite extreme, and provoked the spirit of the times by the very reluctance they shewed on all occasions to comply with it. Every dormant privilege of the crown, every phantom of prerogative, which had kept the simpler ages in awe, was now very unseasonably conjured up, to terrify all that durst oppose themselves to encroaching royalty. Lawyers and church-men were employed in this service. And in their fierce endeavour to uphold a tottering throne by false supports, they entirely overthrew it. The nation was out of all patience to hear the one decree the empire of the kings of *England* to be absolute and uncontrolable by human law: and the other gave more offence, than they found credit, by pretending that the right of kings to such

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empire was divine [h]. Every artifice indeed of chicane and sophistry was called in to the sup-

h The doctrines of divine right, as propagated by the churchmen of that time in their books and sermons, are well known.—Those of the lawyers were such as these—It had been alleged on the part of Mr. HAMPDEN, in the great cause of ship-money, "that by a fundamental policy in the creation of the frame of this kingdom, in case the monarch of *England* should be inclined to exact from his subjects at his pleasure, he should be restrained, for that he could have nothing from them, but upon a common consent of parliament." Sir ROBERT BERKELEY, one of the judges of the king's-bench, affirmed—"That the law knows no such king-yoking policy:"—Sir THOMAS TREVOR, one of the barons of the exchequer, "That our king hath as much power and prerogative belonging to him as any prince in Christendom:"—The attorney-general, Sir JOHN BANKS, "That the king of *England* hath an entire empire; he is an absolute monarch: nothing can be given to an absolute prince! but is inherent in his person." *State Trials*, vol. i. Such was the language of the guardians of the LAW, that temple or sanctuary, as it has been called, whither the subject is to run for shelter and protection. Had not Mr. ST. JOHN then much reason for saying, as he did on that occasion, "We have the fabric of the temple still; but the Gods, the DII TUTELARES, are gone?" There is the more force and propriety in this censure, as it comes from a man who was himself of the profession. And another of the same order, the best and wisest perhaps that frequented the temple of law in those days, proceeds with a just indignation still further,—"These men (said Mr. HIDE, in a speech to the lords) have, upon vulgar fears, delivered [illegible] forts

port of these maxims of law and theology. But the season for religious and civil liberty to prevail over the impotent attempts of each, was at hand. The near approach of the *divine form* created an enthusiasm, which nothing could resist. It frustrated the generous views even of her first and sincerest worshipers. In the career of those ecstatic orgies, the unhappy king could not prevent his ministers, first, and afterwards the constitution itself, from falling a victim to that fury, which, in the end, forced off his own head.

they were trusted with, almost without assault; and, in a tame easy trance of flattery and servitude, lost and forfeited (shamefully forfeited) that reputation, awe, and reverence, which the wisdom, courage, and gravity of their venerable predecessors had contracted and fastened to their places; and have even rendered that study and profession, which in all ages hath been, and I hope now shall be, of honourable estimation, so contemptible and vile, that, had not this blessed day come [the day of impeachment of the six judges], all men would have had that quarrel to the Law itself, which MARCIUS had to the *Greek* tongue, who thought it a mockery to learn that language, the masters whereof lived in bondage under others."—Thus these eloquent apologists for law and liberty. The conclusion is, that though in the great bodies of churchmen and lawyers, some will always be found to dishonour themselves, there have never been wanting others to do justice to the public, and to assert, maintain, and preserve, the dignity of their respective professions.

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Such was the issue of this desperate conflict between prerogative and liberty. The wonder was, that this fatal experience should not have rectified all mistakes, and have settled the government on a sure and lasting basis at the Restoration. The people were convinced, that nothing more was requisite to their happiness, than the secure possession of their ancient legal constitution. The re-called family were not so wise. And in their attempts to revive those old exploded claims, which had succeeded so ill with their predecessors, they once more fell from the throne, and left it to the possession of that glorious prince whom the greatly-injured nation has now called to it.

This then will be considered by grateful posterity as the true æra of *English* liberty. It was interwoven indeed with the very principles of the constitution. It was inclosed in the ancient trunk of the feudal law, and was propagated from it[i]. But its operation was weak

[i] This appears even from Mr. HUME's own account of the feudal times; incomparably the best part of his *History of England*. And it is to be presumed that, if so ingenuous a writer had begun his work at the right end, he would have been led, by the evidence of so palpable a truth, to express himself more favourably, indeed more consistently, of the *English* constitution. But having, by

and partial in that state of its infancy. It acquired fresh force and vigour with age, and has

some odd chance, written the history of the STUARTS first, and afterwards of the TUDORS, (in both which he found it for his purpose to adopt the notion of a despotic independent spirit in the *English* monarchy), he chuses in the last part of his work, which contains the history of *England from* JULIUS CÆSAR *to* HENRY VII. to abide by his former fancy; on this pretence, that, in the administration of the feudal government, the liberty of the subject was incomplete and partial; often precarious and uncertain: a way, in which the learned historian might prove, that no nation under heaven ever was, or ever will be, possessed of a FREE CONSTITUTION.

By the FREE CONSTITUTION of the *English* monarchy, every advocate of liberty, that understands himself, I suppose, means, that limited plan of policy, by which the supreme legislative power (including in this general term the power of levying money) is lodged, not in the prince singly, but jointly in the prince and people; whether the *popular* part of the constitution be denominated *the king's* or *kingdom's great council*, as it was in the proper feudal times; or *the parliament*, as it came to be called afterwards; or, lastly, *the two houses of parliament*, as the style has now been for several ages.

To tell us, that this constitution has been different at different times, because the regal or popular influence has at different times been more or less predominant, is only playing with a word, and confounding *constitution* with *administration*. According to this way of speaking, we have not only had *three or four* *, but possibly three or four score, different constitutions. So long as that great

* Mr. HUME'S Hist. vol. v. p. 472, *n.* ed. 8vo, 1763.

DIALOGUE VI. now at length extended its influence to every part of the political system.

Henceforward, may we not indulge in the expectation that both prince and people will be too wise to violate this glorious constitution: the only one in the records of time, which hath ever attained to the perfection of civil government? All the blessings of freedom which can consist with kingly rule, the people have: all the prerogatives of royalty, which can con-

distribution of the supreme authority took place (and it has constantly and invariably taken place, whatever other changes there might be, from the *Norman* establishment down to our times) the nation was always enabled, at least *authorized*, to regulate all subordinate, or, if you will, supereminent claims and pretensions. This it effectually did at the *Revolution*, and, by so doing, has not created a *new plan of policy*, but perfected the old one. The great MASTER-WHEEL of the *English* constitution is still the same; only freed from those checks and restraints, by which, under the specious name of *prerogatives*, time and opportunity had taught our kings to obstruct and embarrass its free and regular movements.

On the whole, it is to be lamented that Mr. HUME's too zealous concern for the honour of the house of STUART, operating uniformly through all the volumes of his history, has brought disgrace on a work, which, in the main, is agreeably written, and is indeed the most readable *general* account of the *English* affairs, that has yet been given to the public.

sist with civil freedom, are indulged to the king. From this just intermixture of the popular and regal forms, planted together in the earliest days, but grown up at length to full maturity, there arises a reasonable hope that the *English* constitution will flourish to the latest ages; and continue, through them all, the boast and glory of our country, and the envy and admiration of the rest of the world.

MR. SOMERS.

How generous in your lordship is this patriot augury of immortality to the *English* constitution! Yet I dare not be so sanguine in my expectations [k]. And Sir JOHN MAYNARD, I suspect, who has seen the madness of kings and people, in their turns, will hardly expect

[k] A great lawyer, however, and one of the ornaments of Mr. SOMERS's own house, is not afraid to indulge in these generous expectations. In a late treatise, in which he explains, with exquisite learning, the genius of the feudal policy, "These principles, says he, are the principles of freedom, of justice, and safety. The *English* constitution is formed upon them. Their reason will subsist, as long as the frame of it shall stand; and being maintained in purity and vigour, will preserve it from the usual mortality of government." *Considerations on the Law of Forfeiture*, 3d ed. Lond. 1748.

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it from me. It may be sufficient that we put up our ardent vows to Heaven, for the long continuance of it. Less than this cannot be dispensed with in an honest man. Every blessing of civil policy is secured to us by this new but constitutional settlement. And may our happy country enjoy it, at least as long as they have the sense to value, and the virtue to deserve it!

SIR J. MAYNARD.

When these fail, our wishes, and even prayers themselves, will hardly preserve us. Vice and folly, as you say, may do much towards defeating the purposes of the best government. What effect these may have, in time, on the *English* liberty, I would not, for the omen's sake, undertake to say. YOU, my lord, and Mr. SOMERS (who are so much younger men) may be able, hereafter, to conjecture with more certainty of its duration. It is enough for me that I have lived to see my country in possession of it.

DIALOGUES VII. AND VIII.

ON THE

USES OF FOREIGN TRAVEL,

BETWEEN

LORD SHAFTESBURY

AND

MR. LOCKE.

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ON THE USES OF FOREIGN TRAVEL.

LORD SHAFTESBURY—MR. LOCKE;

TO ROBERT MOLESWORTH, ESQ.

I COULD not but be much surprised, my dear friend, to receive your commands on a subject, of which You, of all men, are the greatest master. For who could so well advise the party, you speak of, or resolve the general question concerning *The Uses of Foreign Travel*, considered as a part of modern breeding and education, as HE, who has himself profited so much by this practice, and, in a late excellent treatise[a], has given so convincing a proof of its utility?

Besides, your application to me is a little suspicious; and looks as if you wanted to draw

[a] Account of *Denmark*, as it was in the year 1692.

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from me a confirmation of your own sentiments, rather than a candid examination of them. For how was it possible for you not to foresee the difficulty I must be under, in debating this point with you? When have I been able to dissent from you in any question of morals or policy? and especially what chance for my doing it in this instance, when you know the bias which my own education, conducted in this way, must have left upon me?

I am therefore at a loss, as I said, to account for your fancy in making me of your council on this occasion. But, whatever your purpose might be, since you have thought fit to honour me so far, I must own your Letter of Inquiry could not possibly have found me in a fitter season.

I happened just then to amuse myself with recollecting a conversation, which, not many days before, had passed between me and a certain Philosopher of great note, on that very subject.

You know the esteem I have of this Philosopher; I mean, for such of his writings, as are most popular, and deserve to be so; such as his pieces on *Government*, *Trade*, *Liberty*,

and *Education*. No man understands the world better; or reasons more clearly on those subjects, in which that world takes itself to be most of all, and is, in truth, very nearly concerned. DIALOGUE VII.

His Philosophy, properly so called, is not, I doubt, of so good a taste; at least, his notion of morals is too modern for my relish: I had put myself to school to other masters, and had learnt, you know, from his betters what to think of *Life and Manners*; which they treat in a style quite out of the way of these subverters of ideal worlds [b], and architects on material principles [c].

But on this head, my dear Sir, you have heard me speak often, and may hear from me more at large on some other occasion. With exception to this one article (an important one, however), no man is more able, than Mr. LOCKE, or more privileged by his long experience, to give us Lectures on the good old

[b] Such as certain philosophers amused themselves with building, on *Innate Ideas*.

[c] *Ideas of Sensation*—on which principles, indeed, a late writer has constructed, but by no fault of Mr. LOCKE, a *material* system of the grossest Epicurism. See a work entitled, *De l'Esprit*, in 2 tom. *Amst.* 1759.

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chapter of *Education*; which many others indeed have discussed; but none with so much good sense and with so constant an eye to the use and business of the world as this writer.

The purpose of your inquiry, then, cannot, as I suppose, be any other way so well answered, as by putting into your hands a faithful account of his sentiments on the conduct and use of *Travelling*: especially, as you will perceive at the same time what my notions are (if that be of any importance to you) on the same subject.

If I were composing a Dialogue in the old mimetical, or poetic form, I should tell you, perhaps, the occasion that led us into this track of conversation. Nay, I should tell you what accident had brought us together; and should even omit no circumstance of *time* or *place*, which might be proper to let you into the scene, and make you, as it were, one of us.

But these punctilios of decorum are thought too constraining, and, as such, are wisely laid aside, by the easy moderns. Nay, the very notion of Dialogue, such as it was in the politest ages of antiquity, is so little comprehended in our days, that I question much, if

these papers were to fall into other hands than your own, whether they would not appear in a high degree fantastic and visionary. It would never be imagined that a point of morals or philosophy could be regularly treated in what is called a *conversation-piece;* or that any thing so unlike the commerce of our world could have taken place between men, that had any use or knowledge of it.

This, I say, might be the opinion of men of better breeding; of those, who are acquainted with the fashion, and are themselves practised in the conversations, of the polite world. The *formalists*, on the other hand, would be out of patience, I can suppose, at this sceptical manner of debate, which ends in nothing; and after the waste of much breath, leaves the matter at last undecided, and just as it was taken up.

All this, it must be owned, is very true. But as it is not my intention to submit the following draught to such critics, you, who know me, will accept this recital, made in my own way, and pretty much as it passed. You may well be trusted to make your own conclusions from what is offered on either side of the

DIALOGUE VII. argument, and will need no officious monitor to instruct you on which side the truth lies.

Not to detain you, by further preliminaries, from the entertainment (such as it is) which I have promised you; you may suppose, if you please, Mr. LOCKE and me, in company with some other of our common friends, sitting together in my library, and entering on the subject in the following manner.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

And is not TRAVELLING then, in your opinion, one of the best of those methods, which can be taken to polish and form the manners of our liberal youth, and to fit them for the business and conversation of the world?

MR. LOCKE.

I think not. I see but little good, in proportion to the time it takes up, that can be drawn from it, under any management; but, in the way in which it commonly is and must be conducted, so long as *travel* is considered

as a part of early education, I see nothing but mischiefs spring from it. DIALOGUE VII.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

What! necessarily spring from it? And is there no way to stop their growth; or at least prevent their choking the good plants, which that soil is capable of producing?

MR. LOCKE.

This indeed I must not absolutely affirm: your Lordship's example, I confess, stands in my way. But if your own education, which was conducted in this form, and creates a prejudice for it, be pleaded against me, I may still say, that the argument extends no further than to qualify the assertion; and that, as in other cases, the rule is general, though with some exceptions.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

It was not my meaning to put your politeness to this proof. I would even take no ad-

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vantage of the exception which you might consent to make in the case of many other travellers, who have, doubtless, a better claim, than myself, to this indulgence. What I would gladly know of you, is, Whether, in general, *Travel* be not an excellent school for our ingenuous and noble youth; and whether it may not, on the whole, deserve the countenance of a philosopher, who understands the world, and has himself been formed by it?

MR. LOCKE.

Your Lordship, I think, will do well to put *philosophy* out of the question. There is so much to be said against *Travel* in that view, that the matter would clearly be determined against you. It is by other rules, and what are called the *maxims of the world* (which your Lordship understands too well, to join them with philosophy), that the advocate for travelling must demand to have his cause tried, if he would hope to come off, in the dispute, with any advantage.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

Yet philosophy was not always of this mind. You know, when the best proficients in that

science gave a countenance to this practice, by their own example: a good part of their life was spent in foreign countries; and they did not presume to set up for masters of wisdom, till experience and much insight into the manners of men had qualified them for that great office. Hence they became the ablest and wisest men of the whole world; and their wisdom was not in those days of the less account for the politeness, that was mixed with it.

MR. LOCKE.

Those wise men might have their reasons for this different practice. They most of them, I think, set up for Politicians and Legislators, as well as Philosophers; and in that infancy of arts and commerce, when distant nations had small intercourse with each other, it might be of real advantage to them, at least it might serve their reputation with the people, to spend some years in voyages to such countries as were in the highest fame for their wisdom or good government.

Besides, the Sages of those times made a wondrous mystery of their wisdom: a sure sign, perhaps, that they were not over-stocked

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with it. It was confined to certain schools and fraternities; or was locked up still more closely in the breasts of particular persons. Knowledge was not then diffused in books and general conversation, as amongst us; but was to be obtained by frequenting the academies or houses of those privileged men, who, by a thousand ambitious arts, had drawn to themselves the applause and veneration of the rest of the world.

All this might be said in favour of your Lordship's old Sages. Yet one of them, who deserved that name the best, was no great Traveller. I remember to have read, that SOCRATES had never stirred out of *Athens*; and that, when his admirers would sometimes ask him why he affected this singularity, he was used to say, *That Stones and Trees did not edify him:* intimating, I suppose, that the sight of fine towns and fine countries, which the voyagers of those days, as of ours, made a matter of much vanity, was the principal fruit they had reaped to themselves from their fashionable labours.

However, allowing your lordship to make the most of these respectable authorities for the use of travelling, it must still be remembered,

that they are wide of our present purpose. They were *Sages*, that travelled: and we are now inquiring, whether this be the way for young men to *become* Sages. PLATO might pick up more learning in his Voyages, than any body since has been able to understand; and yet a youth of eighteen be little the wiser for staring away two or three years in mysterious *Egypt*. DIALOGUE VII.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

Why, truly, if he carried nothing abroad with him but the use of his eye-sight, I should be much of your mind with regard to the improvements he might be expected to bring back with him. But let him hear and observe a little, as well as see; and methinks a youth of eighteen might pick up something of value, though he should not return laden with the mysteries of *Egypt*.

As to the gaiety on the ancient Sages, I could be much entertained with it, if I did not recollect that the more enlightened moderns have, also, been of their mind in this instance. To say nothing of other countries, which yet have risen in reputation for knowledge and civility in proportion to their acquaintance with the

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neighbouring nations, surely it must be allowed of our *own*, that all its valuable acquisitions in both have been forwarded at least, if not occasioned, by this reasonable practice. We are now, without doubt, arrived at the summit of politeness, and may subsist at length upon our own proper stock. But was this always the case? And must it not be acknowledged, that the brightest periods of our story are those, in which our noble youth were fashioned in the school of foreign Travel? You will hardly pretend that the ornaments of the second CHARLES' and ELIZABETH'S courts were cast in the coarse mould of this *home-breeding*.

MR. LOCKE.

I shall perhaps carry my pretensions still further, and affirm it had been much better if they had been so.

I know what is to be said for the voyagers in ELIZABETH'S time. We were just then emerging from ignorance and barbarity. Learning and the Arts were but then getting up; and were best acquired, we will say, in foreign schools, and the commerce of other nations, which might have the start of us in such im-

provements. The state of *Europe* at that time was not unlike what I observed of the old world, when knowledge was in few hands, and the exclusive property, as it were, of particular persons. So that it was to be travelled for, and fetched home, by such as would have it. *Italy*, in particular, was in those days, as it had long been, the theatre of politeness, and without doubt could furnish us with very much of the learning we most wanted. DIALOGUE VII.

This then was the fashionable route of our curious and courtly youth: and many accomplished persons, I can readily admit, were to be found in the number of our *Italian* Travellers. Yet, methinks, they had done better to stay at home, and at least import the arts of *Italy*, if they were necessary to them, in sager heads than their own.

I say this, because it is no secret that the civility, we thus acquired, was dearly paid for; and that irreligion, and even Atheism, were packed up among their choicest gleanings, and shewn about, at their return, as curiosities, which could not but very much enhance the consideration of those who had been to gather them beyond the mountains [d].

[d] "Infidelity is the natural product of restraint and "spiritual tyranny — Hence it is we see France and Italy

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LORD SHAFTESBURY.

Or, shall we say, that this impiety of the time was only employed to correct its superstition? And that the philosophic spirits of that age trafficked in these wares, as thinking them a proper antidote to such as another set of missionaries largely dealt in: I mean, the *agnus Dei's, holy beads, and consecrated medals?*

MR. LOCKE.

Take it which way you will, the conclusion, I believe, will scarcely be much in favour of our *Italian* Travellers.—As to the worthies of CHARLES's court, your Lordship, without doubt, is disposed to divert yourself with them. For, if they brought any thing with them from

" over-run with the worst kind of *Deism*. There our tra-
" velling gentry first picked it up for a rarity. And, in-
" deed, at first, without much malice. It was brought
" home in a cargo of new fashions: and worn, for some
" time, with that levity, by the importers, and treated
" with that contempt by the rest, as suited, and was due,
" to the apishness of foreign manners: till a set, &c."
Bishop of GLOUCESTER's *Sermon on the Suppression of the late Rebellion*, p. 78.

France, besides the dress of its follies and vices (excepting always the sacred babble of their language), it is a secret which it has not been my fortune to be apprized of. DIALOGUE VII.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

And so, because Travelling may, by accident, be attended with some ill effects, you roundly determine against the thing itself; as if the national improvement in arts and civility, which unquestionably arose from it, were to go for nothing!

MR. LOCKE.

I would have it go for no more than it is honestly worth; which surely is something less than the price paid for it, our principles and our morals. And I doubt the truth is, that this degeneracy in both was the usual acquisition of our travelled youth, and the improvement, your Lordship speaks of, only the accidental benefit.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

Without doubt, there is no extending our acquaintance with the world, but we run the

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risk of catching its vices, as well as virtues. Yet, push this conclusion as far as it will go, and you shut up mankind in absolute and incurable barbarism. Such is the unhappy condition of human nature, that in striving to cultivate its powers, you furnish the opportunities, at least, of its corruption. Yet to leave it in that sordid state, for fear of those abuses, is methinks but acting with the weak apprehension of fond mothers; who deny their children the liberty of stirring from the fire-side, for fear of the dirt or damp air, which, in their field-exercises, may chance to incommode them.

MR. LOCKE.

The allusion would be apt, if the health of the mind, as of the body, depended on the use of such liberty; or if it were true, that one could as little help breathing the air of vice, as that of the heavens. But, though I have heard much of the dangers to which Virtue is exposed in this bad world, I have never understood that Vice is its proper element.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

Yet methinks, Sir, it will be hard to keep clear of it in any part of the world, that I am

acquainted with: unless perhaps you take this happy Island of ours to be as free from Vice, as a Neighbouring one, they say, is from Venom. DIALOGUE VII.

MR. LOCKE.

There are, however, degrees in Vice, as well as varieties of it; and I cannot think it necessary for us to be greater proficients than we are, or to import new species of it; by rambling into countries where it may chance to rage with greater virulence, or where such modes of it, at least, prevail, as are luckily unknown to us. And such, I doubt, were the fruits of our *Italian* and *French* travels.

But allowing that Vice were of every clime, the same every where, and equally malignant, I should still imagine our youth to be safer from the infection at home, under the eye and wing of their own parents or families, than wandering at large in foreign countries, with as little care of others, as prudence of their own, to guard them from this danger.

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LORD SHAFTESBURY.

Yes, if they were turned loose into this wicked world, and left to their own devices. But, what if some sage Philosopher —

MR. LOCKE.

Some God, you would say, in the shape of a Tutor; for a mere mortal Guide of that stamp is not easily met with. Or, if He were, his wisdom, I doubt, would hardly give him the authority, he stands in need of, for the discharge of his function. But I take your Lordship's raillery, and could say in my turn, But what if some inquisitive and well-disposed young Nobleman—

After all, we may let these two voyagers, so well matched and fitted to each other, proceed on their journey. The question at present is of no such rarities; but of raw, ignorant, ungovernable boys, on the one hand, and of shallow, servile, and interested governors, on the other. And if any good can arise from such worthies as these, sauntering within the circle

of the grand Tour, the magic of travelling can *call up* more than I have ever yet seen. DIALOGUE VII.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

It may be true, perhaps, that the advantages of travelling are not so great, or so general, as is sometimes pretended. Yet, on the other hand, that there are advantages, and considerable ones too, can hardly be denied. And to come at length more closely to the point (for what has hitherto passed is but a sort of prelude to the main argument) let me have leave to state those advantages clearly and distinctly to you, and then to request your own proper sense (I mean as a man of the world, according to the advice you just now gave me, and not as a Philosopher) of this practice.

MR. LOCKE.

Is this fair dealing in your Lordship? I supposed that by starting this question you had meant only, as on other occasions, to engage an old man in a little conversation; whereas your purpose, I now find, is to make a formal debate of it.

Not a formal debate, but a free conference; for which we seem to have leisure enough; and the subject is, besides, of real importance. I may presume to answer for our friends here, that they will not be displeased to assist at it.

I am aware, as you said, that the practice may be sometimes inconvenient, as it is commonly managed, on the side of *morals*; and I would not be thought to have benefited so little by yours, and the instructions of my other masters, as not to lay the greatest stress on that consideration.

But, after all, these inconveniences may be pretty well avoided, by the choice of an honest and able governor. Such an one it will not be impossible to find, if the persons concerned be in earnest to look out for him: I do not say in *Cells*, for a Pedant without manners; and still less, you will say, in *Camps*, for a mannered man without principles or letters; but, in the world at large, for some learned and well-accomplished person, who, yet, may not disdain to be engaged

in this noblest office of conducting a young gentleman's education.

Under such a Governor, as this, the danger, to which a young man's morals may be exposed by early travel, will be tolerably guarded against; and to make amends for the hazard he runs in this respect, I see, on the other hand, so many reasons for breeding young men in this way, so many benefits arising from it at all times, and such peculiar inducements with regard to the present state of our own country, that, I think, we shall hardly be of two minds, when you have attended to them.

MR. LOCKE.

We shall see that in due time. For the present, the serious air, you assume, so different from your wonted manner, secures my attention.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

I cannot tell what may be the opinion of others; but ignorance and barbarity seem to me to be the parents of the most and the worst vices. Conceit, pride, bigotry, insolence, fero-

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city, cruelty, are the native product of the human mind, kept uncultivated. Self-love, which makes so predominant a part in the constitution of man, that some sufferers by its excesses have mistaken it for the sole spring of all his actions, naturally engenders these vices, when no care is taken to controul its operations by another principle.

On this account, wise men have had recourse to various expedients; such as the provision of Laws; the culture of Arts and Letters; and, in general, all that discipline which comes under the notion of early tutorage and education. But none of these has been found so effectual to the end in view, or is so immediately directed to the purpose of enlarging the mind, and curing it, at once, of all its obstinate and malignant prejudices, as a knowledge of the world acquired in the way of society, and general conversation.

To say nothing of the solitary sequestered life, which all men agree to term *Savage*, look only on those smaller knots and fraternities of men, which meet together in our provincial towns and cities, and, without any larger commerce, are confined within the narrow enclosure of their own walls or districts. In as

much as this condition is more social than the other, it is, without doubt, more eligible. Yet see how many weak views are entertained by these separate clans, how many fond conceits, and over-weening fancies! The world seems to them shrunk up into their own private circle; just as the heavens appear to children to be contained within the limits of their own horizon.

Extend this prospect of mankind to still greater combinations, to states, kingdoms, nations, and what we call a whole people. By this freer intercourse, indeed, their thoughts take a larger range, and their minds open to more generous and manly conceptions. Yet their native barbarism sticks close to them, and requires to be loosened and worn off by a more social habit, by the experience of a still wider and more thorough communication. Tribes of men, although very numerous, yet, if shut up within one territory, and held closely together under the influence of the same political constitution, easily assimilate, as it were; run into the same common sentiments and opinions; and presently take, in the whole extent of their community, one uniform prevailing character,

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Hence the necessity of their still looking beyond their *own*, into other combinations and societies; that so, as the mind strengthens by this exercise, they may be enabled to shake off their local, as we may say, and territorial prejudices.

Those other societies may not be without their defects, which it will be equally proper to keep clear of. But, by this free prospect of the differences subsisting between different nations, each naturally gets quit of his own peculiar and characteristic vices; and those of others, presenting themselves to our unbiassed observation, are not so readily entertained, or do not cling so fast to us, as what have grown up with us, and, by long unquestioned use, are become, as we well express it, a *second nature*.

Thus, by this near approach and attrition, as it were, of each other, our rude parts give way; our rough corners are insensibly worn of; and we are polished by degrees into a general and universal humanity.

EXTERNI *nequid valeat per læve morari*,

to use the poet's words, though with some small difference, I believe in their application.

What says my friend to these principles? are they just and reasonable? or, am I going to build on precarious and insecure foundations? DIALOGUE VII.

MR. LOCKE.

Whatever defect there may be in this foundation, your Lordship, as a wise architect, is for sparing no cost or pains in providing for its stability. Yet, methinks, you go deeper for it, than you need. At least, I did not expect your defence of Travelling would require you to make these profound researches into human nature.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

I take your meaning. These researches, you would say, are so little profound, that I might have spared myself the trouble of making them at all, at least in conversation with a philosopher. Be that as it will; provided the principles themselves, I am contending for, be well founded. For the conclusion necessarily follows, "That therefore FOREIGN TRAVEL is, "of all others, the most important and essen-"tial part of Education."

That, Sir, is my meaning; and, though expressed in more words than may be necessary, it is surely not coloured by any rhetorical exaggerations. But you must allow me to proceed in my own way, and enforce the general argument, I have delivered, by applying it to the particular exigencies and necessities of our *English* youth.

You, who have been abroad in the world, and have so just a knowledge of other states and countries, tell me, if there can be any thing more ridiculous than the idiot PREJUDICES of our home-bred gentlemen; which shew themselves, whenever their own dear Island comes, in any respect, to be the topic of conversation. What wondrous conceits of their own prowess, wisdom, nay of their manners and politeness! With what disdain is a foreigner mentioned by them, and with what apparent signs of aversion is his very person treated! They scarcely give you leave to suppose that any virtuous quality can thrive out of their own air, or that good sense can be expressed in any foreign language. Nay, their foolish prepossession extends to their very soil

and climate. Such warm patriots are they, such furious lovers of their country, that they will have it to be the theatre of all convenience, delight, and beauty. DIALOGUE VII.

"To hear their discourse among themselves, "one would imagine that the finest lands near "the *Euphrates*, the Babylonian or Persian "*Paradises*, the rich plains of *Eygpt*, the "Græcian *Tempe*, the Roman *Campania*, "*Lombardy*, *Provence*, the Spanish *Anda-* "*lusia*, or the most delicious tracts in the "Eastern or Western *Indies*, were con- "temptible countries in respect of what they "dote upon under the name of *Old England*[e]."

Now, if it were only for the sake of truth and decency, if it were but to avoid the ridicule to which these palpable absurdities and childish fancies expose them, one cannot but wish that our countrymen would open their eyes, and extend their prospect beyond their own foggy air, and dirty acres.

But this is the least inconvenience of their home breeding. How many low HABITS and sordid practices grow upon our youth of for-

[e] CHARACT. Vol. iii. Dis. iii.

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tune, and even of quality, from the influence of their family, or at best provincial, education!

They retain so much of their *Saxon* or *Norman* character, that their noblest passion is that of the Chace; unless a horse-race may, haply, contend with it. Their ideas are all taken from the stable or kennel; and they have hardly words for any other sort of conversation.

In conjunction with this habit, or in direct consequence of it, they plunge themselves into the brutalities of the bottle and table. Having little use of the faculty of thinking or discoursing on any reasonable subject, they care not how soon they disable themselves for either. To this end, their surloins are of sovereign effect; and if any spark of the *divine particle* be still unsubdued, they quench it forthwith in the strongest wines, or, which suits their taste and design best, in their own country liquor.

This sottish debauch leads to others. My young master will be denied no animal gratification. And thus low intrigues and vulgar amours follow of course, in which the sum of his refined pleasures is, at length, completed.

The rest of his life runs on in this drowzy tenour; unless perhaps you except those intervals, which can hardly be called *lucid*, when his half-closed understanding seems stunned, rather than awakened, by party-rage, election bustle, and the noise of faction.

Admirable patriots these! and usefuller citizens by far, than if they had acquired some relish of temperance, decency, and reason, in foreign courts, and the more improved societies of *Europe*.

But suppose our young gentleman to have escaped this sordid taste, and by better luck than ordinary to have finished his home education without much injury to his morals. Nay, suppose him to be inured, in good time, to better discipline, and to have had the advantage of what is called amongst us, by a violent figure of speech, *a liberal education*.

To put the case at the best, suppose him to have been well whipped through one of our public schools, and to come full fraught, at length, with *Latin* and *Greek*, from his college. You see him, now, on the verge of the world, and just ready to step into it. But, good heavens, with what PRINCIPLES and HABITS

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NERS? His spirit broken by the servile awe of pedants, and his body unfashioned by the genteeler exercises! Timid at the same time, and rude; illiberal and ungraceful! An absurd compound of abject sentiments, and bigoted notions, on the one hand; and of clownish, coarse, ungainly demeanor, on the other! In a word, both in mind and person, the furthest in the world from any thing that is handsome, gentlemanlike, or of use and acceptation in good company!

Bring but one of these grown boys into a circle of well-bred people, such as his rank and fortune entitle him, and in a manner oblige him, to live with: and see how forbidding his air, how embarrassed all his looks and motions! His awkward attempts at civility would provoke laughter, if, again, his rustic painful bashfulness did not excite one's pity. What wonder if the young man, under these circumstances, is glad to shrink away, as soon as possible, from so constraining a situation; and to seek the low society of his inferiors, at least of such as himself among his equals, where he can be at ease, and give a loose to his unformed and disorderly behaviour!

But now, on the other hand, let a young gentleman, who has been trained abroad; who has been accustomed to the sight and conversation of men; who has learnt his exercises, has some use of the languages, and has read his HORACE or HOMER in good company; let such an one, at his return, make his appearance in the best societies; and see with what ease and address he sustains his part in them! how liberal his air and manner! how managed and decorous his delivery of himself! In short, how welcome to every body, and how prepared to acquit himself in the ordinary commerce of the world, and in conversation!

I should think, if there were no other advantage of early travel, beside this of *manners*, it were well worth setting against all the other inconveniences, whatever they be, of this sort of Education.

MR. LOCKE.

Good my Lord——

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

I know what you would say: that *manners*, in the proper acceptation of the word, at least in

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the sense of wise men, implies much more than the ease, assurance, civility, (call it what you will) which a young Traveller is supposed to acquire in his intercourse with the politer nations. Without doubt, it does. But give me this foundation of good breeding to work upon; and if I had the tutorage of a noble youth, I durst be answerable for all the rest, which even a philosopher includes in his sublime notion of *manners*: whereas, without it, his improvements of other sorts would be almost thrown away; nay, his virtues themselves would be offensive and unlovely.

But do not imagine I confine myself to *manners* in the obvious meaning of that term. I further understand by it an ability for ingenuous, useful, and manly conversation. For a traveller, that makes the proper use of his opportunities, will be all of a piece, and return as polished in his mind and understanding, as in his person.

And here, again, how deficient is the turn and course of our ordinary education! Whither would you send our young pupil, to accomplish himself in the necessary art of speaking handsomely and thinking justly? What companions have you provided for him, or what instructors in this man-science will you

direct him to? shall he court the acquaintance of some lettered pedagogue in the schools, or solicit the precious communication of some famed professor in the occult sciences? Wonderful models of correct wit, sublime sense, and elegant expression! DIALOGUE VII.

I have read of an ancient Rhetorician, that took upon him to teach others the *art of speaking*; but in such a way, says my author, that if a man had a mind to learn the art of *not speaking*, he could not have been directed to an abler master.

I forbear the application of my little tale, out of pure respect to the modern disciples and ornaments of this ancient school; and, without pushing matters so far, it will be owned, that whatever advantage of this sort may be left at home, the loss will be amply made up to an inquisitive traveller, on the Continent. *France*, and even *Italy*, abounds in men of distinguished literature and politeness. Nay, a *German* Professor may supply the place of an University Doctor. Think, what illustrious persons may be sometimes met with even in a *Dutch* town: and how many instructive hours you and I have passed in conversation with such knowing, candid, and accomplished gen-

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lars, as LE CLERC and LIMBORCH. Philosophy, and even Divinity, could take a liberal air, under their management; and eloquence itself might be learned, on almost every subject, in their company.

I consider then the acquaintance and familiarity of men of eminent parts and genius, as another considerable benefit resulting from this way of foreign education.

Still there are higher things in view (for, now I have ventured thus far in the dogmatic tone, I find myself, like our authorized teachers, a little impatient of control, and in a humour to run myself out without lett or interruption); still, I say, there are higher advantages in view from travelled culture and education.

You may think as slightly as you please, of the exterior polish of *manners*, or may even treat as superficial the *information* that can be acquired in good company. But what say you to that supreme accomplishment, a KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD; a science so useful, as to supersede or disgrace all the rest; and so profound, as to merit all the honours, and to fill up all the measures of the best philosophy?

For, by *a knowledge of the world*, I mean that which results from the observation of men and things; from an acquaintance with the customs and usages of other nations; from some insight into their policies, government, religion; in a word, from the study and contemplation of men; as they present themselves on the great stage of the world, in various forms, and under different appearances. This is that master-science, which a gentleman should comprehend, and which our schools and colleges never heard of.

I know this science is too difficult to be perfectly acquired, but by long habit and mature reflection. I know it is not to be expected from a slight survey of mankind; from a hasty passage through the different countries, or a short residence in the great towns, of *Europe*. All this I am not to be told; but it must be allowed me at the same time, that so important a study cannot be entered upon too soon, and that the rudiments at least of this science cannot be laid in too early.

The proper business of men, especially those of rank and quality, lies among men. The first and last object of a Gentleman should be an intimate study and knowledge of his species. Say, that some chapters of this great book, the

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world, are above his reach, and too hard for his decyphering. Yet others are easier and more manageable. Initiate a young man betimes in these pursuits; and his progress, as in other things, must be the more sure and successful.

Above all, let him be taught to give an early attention to the manners of men, to observe their dispositions, to inspect and analyze their characters. What a field is here for an intelligent young man, assisted by the superior lights and experience of an able governor! And what a harvest of true knowledge and learning must he gather and bring home with him, from the numberless varied scenes he has passed through in his voyages! With what lustre must such a person appear in the court or senate of his own country! How secure against the attempts of artifice and design! the plots of insidious enemies, or the pretences of false friends! how apt for the business of life, and for bearing his part in public debates and cabinet-consultations!

MR. LOCKE.

Your Lordship declaims so handsomely on this theme, that I am something loth to spoil

your panegyric by asking a plain question, "How this knowledge of the public affairs of "his own country is to be come at, by foreign "politics?" DIALOGUE VII.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

As if the objects of that knowledge were not every where much the same! Bigotry or Fanaticism in religion, selfish or factious intrigues in government, neglected or ill-improved agriculture or commerce, insolence and want of discipline in fleets and armies, a bad-constituted police under venal magistrates, and a corrupt administration; are not these the principal mischiefs to be guarded against by our young citizen, or perhaps senator? And where is the country, which does not afford opportunities of laying in useful lessons on all these subjects?

To say the least, a little home-practice will go a great way, when entered upon with so true a preparation of general knowledge. On the other hand, it hardly needs to be observed, the disadvantage, with which our young Islander must come into this scene; a novice to the affairs of the world; a stranger to men and characters; and who has never perhaps stretched

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his observation beyond the narrow circle of his companions, or even his own family.

My panegyric, as you call this plain representation of facts and things, would never have an end, if I were to take to myself all the advantages, which this topic of an early knowledge of the world in a young traveller affords me. But I leave the rest to be supplied out of these hints; and pass on to other considerations, which seem of moment to the credit and reputation of our country, and to the accomplishment, at least, of our ingenuous youth; however they may rank in the estimation of some, who in modern times have assumed to themselves the name and office of Philosophers.

You, who have so much a nobler way of thinking than these nominal sages, will allow me, I hope, to lay some stress on the LIBERAL ARTS; which adorn and embellish human life; and, where they prevail to some degree of perfection, are among the surest marks of the civility and politeness of any people.

It is notorious enough how backward we have been, and still are, in all these elegant and muse-like applications. There is little or nothing in the way of *picture, sculpture,* and

the arts of *design* among us, that can stand the test of a knowing and judicious eye. It is but of late we have begun to form to ourselves any thing like an *ear* in harmony and the proportions of just music. And whatever magisterial airs our fashionable workmen in the dramatic and poetical kinds may give themselves in their prologues and prefaces, it is no secret to such as have looked into the ancient masters, or have made an acquaintance with the style and manner of the politer moderns, that we are far from possessing a right taste in these things, and that the Muses have hitherto shewn themselves but little indulgent to us. DIALOGUE VII.

The courtship, we have paid to them, has been pressing and ardent, if you will; but this circumstance, though it may do much, nay is thought to do every thing with the sex, seems not to have succeeded with these coy Ladies. Passion and assiduity are not the only things: somewhat of an address and management is looked for in our advances. Wherever the defect lies, and whatever be the cure for it, certain it is, there is much of the Gothic manner in the performances of our best artists: there is neither chasteness of design, nor elegance of hand, in our manual operations: nothing like correct-

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ness of thought, simplicity of style, or the grace of numbers, in our literate productions.

'Tis true, the strength and vigour of our genius has been exerted in other things. We have been solicitous to procure a just taste in policy and government, and have at length succeeded in this first and highest emulation. It may now be proper to apply the liberty, we have so happily gained, to other improvements. There is something, I have ever observed, congenial to the liberal arts in the reigning spirit of a free people. It must then be our own fault, if our progress in every elegant pursuit do not keep pace with our excellent constitution.

But the likeliest way to quicken the growth of these studies, is to turn our attention from the bad models of our own country, and enter into a free commerce and generous struggle, as it were, with our more advanced neighbours. And it is here again, as in the manners and arts of life, the seeds of good taste cannot be committed to the mind too soon. It were then to be wished, that our young men had right impressions of *art* in their tender years; and that, forming their relish among the ablest proficients in *Europe*, they might afterwards

communicate their improvements to their own country.

Thus, it might be hoped, in some convenient time, we should have something of our own to oppose to the wit, learning, and elegance of *France*; and that, in the mechanic execution of the fine arts, we should come at length to vye with the *Italian* masters.

Nor think, that such an emulation as this would be without its use, even in a moral and political view. Beauty and virtue are nearer of kin, than every one is perhaps aware of: and the mind that is taken with the charm of what is *true and becoming* in the representation of sensible things, cannot be inattentive to those qualities in the higher species and moral forms. It is thither indeed the virtuoso passion naturally tends; and there, it finally acquiesces.

Quid VERUM *atque* DECENS *curo et rogo, et omnis in hoc sum.*

But I see what you think of this language. Let me add then, that policy, as well as philosophy, is on the side of these studies. Who can doubt their virtue in softening and refining

DIALOGUE VII. the manners of a people? or, to take policy in its vulgar sense, where would be the hurt, if *Britain* were the seat of arts and letters, as well as of trade and liberty? Then might *we* be travelled to, in our turn, as our neighbours are at present: and our country, amidst its other acquisitions, be also enriched (I use the word in its proper, not metaphorical sense) with a new species of commerce.

Not to insist, that the ascendant which one nation takes over another in all public concerns, is very much owing to this pre-eminence of taste and politeness, to its acknowledged superiority, I may say, in the literate and virtuoso character; of which *France* is an instance in our days; as *Italy* is well known to have been in the days of our forefathers.

And, if there be use and value in such things, how shall our ingenuous youth be tinctured with a right sense of them, but by early and well-conducted travel? For what discipline, what examples, what encouragements, have we at home? what academies for the genteel exercises? what conferences for the improvement of art or language? what societies for the cultivation of the liberal character?

The contemplation of these defects carries me still further; to the source and fountain of them all, which I make no scruple to lay open to you. DIALOGUE VII.

"Time was, Sir, when philosophy herself could appear with grace even in courts, when the great and noble, nay and princes themselves, were not ashamed to be of her train, but frequented her studious schools and walks, and were even ambitious of her company in their hours of leisure and recreation.

See now to what unpractised cells and ignoble societies she is degraded! her graceful form faded and shrunk; her ingenuous sprightly air deadened into I know not what gloom and austerity of the cloyster.

You, who have done more than any other, to retrieve her credit and bring her back to the world, can best tell her present degenerate condition. You know where she lies, unapproached by her former suitors; her liberal manner soured into disdain and hate; her persuasive voice, which spoke the language of the Gods, broken into untuned numbers and discordant harshness; and her very sense corrupted into empty sophisms and unintelligible

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jargon. The Graces, those companions of her better days, are all fled: and in their room, a riotous band of fauns and satyrs dance around her. Yet still she assumes a sort of mock-sovereignty; and, under the new name of *Genius of the Schools*, presides, in sullen majesty, over her numerous, servile, awe-struck votaries."

In some such way as this, were I at liberty to pursue the figured speech, and to adopt the higher tone of the ancient masters, would I presume to represent the present state of Erudition, as we see it managed in certain sublime seats and authorized nurseries amongst us.

And would you invite our liberal and noble youth to resort thither? could you expect that their free spirits would stoop to be lectured by bearded boys; or that their minds could ever be formed and tutored by such pedants, in a way that fits them for the real practice of the world and of mankind?

Have we not long enough submitted to the inconveniencies of this monkish education? Look on the generality of those persons who have had their breeding in those seminaries. What principles in morals, in government, in

religion, have sprouted thence! what dispositions have we known corrupted by their discipline! what understandings perverted by their servile and false systems! Has truth, or liberty, or reason, fair play from that quarter? Nay, has not truth, and liberty, and reason, though speaking by ONE of their own sons, been calumniated and rejected! In a word, have they not always set themselves to obstruct the progress of true knowledge, and the cause of freedom? DIALOGUE VII.

If such then be the state of our own seats of literature and education, what more needs be alleged in the behalf of FOREIGN TRAVEL; which is the only means left to remedy these mischiefs, or at least to palliate and correct them?

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ON THE USES OF FOREIGN TRAVEL.

LORD SHAFTESBURY—MR. LOCKE.

TO ROBERT MOLESWORTH, ESQ.

HERE I concluded my defence: when Mr. LOCKE, perceiving, by the attention we all paid to him, that we were now prepared to receive his answer, raised himself in his chair, and, with a firmer tone and look than I expected, addressed himself to me in the following manner.

MR. LOCKE.

Were the subject before us a matter of indifference or curiosity, such as idle men are used to discourse of, I could allow your lordship to pursue it in this way of Socratic raillery and declamation. But, if ever there was a question, that deserved the examination of a philo-

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sopher, properly so called, it is, surely, this of EDUCATION; and, among the various parts of it, none is more strictly to be inquired into, as none is, perhaps, so big with important consequences, as that which comes recommended to us under the specious name of FOREIGN TRAVEL.

I could not, therefore, but wonder to hear your lordship enlarge so much, and so long, on I know not what varnish of manners and good breeding; of the knowledge of men and the world; of arts, languages, and other trappings and shewy appendages of education: just as if an architect should entertain you with a discourse on Festoons and Foliage, or the finishing of his Frize and Capitals, when you expected him to instruct you in what way to erect a solid edifice on firm walls and durable foundations.

What a reasonable man wants to know, is, the proper method of building up *men*: whereas your lordship seems solicitous for little more than tricking out a set of fine *gentlemen*. It seemed, indeed, as if your lordship had calculated your defence of travelling for a knot of Virtuosi, or a still more fashionable circle (where, doubtless, it would pass with much

ease and without contradiction); and had, somehow, forgotten that your hearers are all plain men; one of them, an old one; and he too, as your Lordship loves to qualify him, a philosopher. DIALOGUE VIII.

To speak my mind frankly, my Lord, your defence of foreign travel, as lively and plausible as it seemed, has no solid basis to rest upon. You tell us of many defects in the breeding of our *English* youth, and you would willingly redress them: but in what way this is best done, can never be known from vague and general declamation.

To make this inquiry to purpose, some certain principles must be laid down; some scheme of life and manners must be formed; some idea or model of the character, you would imprint on young minds, must be described; to which we may constantly refer, as we go along; and by which, as a rule, we may estimate the fitness and propriety of that sort of breeding, you would recommend to us.

Since your Lordship then will needs have me dictate to you on the subject of Education, I must have leave to do it in another way, and after a more solemn manner, than you per-

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haps expect from me in this freedom of conversation.

I begin with this certain principle: That the business of education is to form the UNDERSTANDING, and regulate the HEART. If man be a compound of Reason and Passion, the only proper discipline of his nature is that which accomplishes these two purposes.

So far we are, doubtless, agreed. But the subject requires a more particular application of this principle.

You have laboured with much plausibility to persuade us, That the only reasonable education is that which prepares and fits a man for the commerce of the world: and I readily admit the notion, provided we first agree about the meaning of this big word, the WORLD. Your Lordship, it may be, in your sublime view of things, is projecting to make of your Pupil, what is called, in the widest sense of the term, a *Citizen of the World.* A great and awful character, my Lord! But let us advance by just degrees.

First, if you please, let us provide that he be a worthy citizen of *England;* and, by your

favour, let me ennoble this small island of ours with the pompous appellation of the world. It is that world, at least, in which our adventurer is to play his part; and for the commerce of which it concerns him most immediately to be prepared. DIALOGUE VIII.

Now, as your Lordship's chief care is directed, very properly, towards its chief subjects; I mean, the men of rank and fortune, whose ample property and noble birth give their country the greatest concern in their education; let me ask in what manner they are likely to qualify themselves best for the important parts, they are to act in it?

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

Certainly, by acquiring that knowledge, and those accomplishments, that are most proper for the discharge of them.

MR. LOCKE.

Undoubtedly, my Lord: there cannot be two answers to so plain a question. As that education is, in general, the best which forms

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the man, in the best manner; so, in this confined view, that education must be thought the best, which forms the *Englishman*, in the best manner.

To proceed then on this reasonable concession.

An *English* citizen, or, if you will, Senator, (for this is the station to which our greater citizens do, and our best should aspire) can never acquit himself of the duties he owes his country, under this character, but by furnishing himself with all those qualities of the *head* and *heart*, which his superior rank and pretensions demand.

This *last* chapter is an important one; and would be very long, if justice were done to it. But a summary of the main articles, of which it consists, may be given in few words.

I require then in our young aspirant to the name and honours of an *English* Senator, that his mind be early and thoroughly seasoned with the principles of virtue and religion: that he be trained, by a strict discipline, to the command of his temper and passions: that his ambition be awakened, or rather directed, to

its right object, the *public good*; and to that end, that his soul be fired with the love of excellence and true honour: above all, that he have a reverence for the legal constitution of his country, and a fervent affection for the great community to which he belongs.

Your Lordship has a due respect for these virtuous qualities of the HEART, which will give this consideration its full weight with you. But were they of no more account, than many institutors of youth seem disposed to reckon them, still there are other qualities, those of the HEAD, in every man's account essentially requisite to the discharge of those offices, which our greater citizens are destined to sustain.

I require, therefore, in the next place, that our young Senator have a ready and familiar use, at least, of the *Latin* tongue (your Lordship, I know, will add, and of the *Greek;* but in this I am not so peremptory): that he be competently instructed in the elements of science, as well as what are called polite letters: that, especially, he be well grounded in the principles of morals, public and private; that he have made a thorough acquaintance with the history of his own country, and with

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its constitution, Civil and Ecclesiastical: that he have a general insight into the history of the world, ancient and modern: above all, that he have a well-exercised understanding; I mean, that he be taught to reason clearly and consequentially upon any subject: and, further, to put all these abilities to use, that he have a ready command of his own language, and the power of expressing himself, whether in writing or speaking, with ease and perspicuity, at least, if not with elegance.

Other ornamental qualities I omit for the present, which will almost come of themselves, if his education be rightly conducted; or may be acquired with little pains, and in the way of diversion only. But these solid accomplishments I hold it necessary for our youth of quality to possess, by the time in which they usually pass out of the hands of their Tutors and Governors, I mean the age of twenty-one.

Am I unreasonable in these demands? or can any thing less be dispensed with in a gentleman, who, by established custom, is to enter into the world at those years, and to bear a part in the public business and legislature of his country?

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

Without doubt, these accomplishments are no more than may be reasonably required in our young gentleman, or Senator. But how they are to be come at in our vulgar way of *Education,* I do not easily apprehend.

MR. LOCKE.

Of that, in due time. At present, you accept this as a reasonable idea or sketch of an *English* gentleman's character; such as the course of his education ought to imprint upon him: and I shall now shew you very clearly that it is not possible to be attained in the way of *foreign Travel.*

Consider, *first* of all, the unavoidable WASTE OF TIME; of that time which is so precious in every view; not only as being the most proper for making the acquisitions, I speak of; but as being the only period of his life, which he will be at liberty to employ in that manner.

Early youth is flexible and docile: apt to take the impressions of virtue, and ready to admit the principles of knowledge. The facul-

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ties of the mind are then vigorous and alert: the conception quick, and the memory retentive. The humble drudgery of acquiring the elements of literature and science is to young minds an easy and a flattering employment. A submissive reverence for their teachers disposes them to proceed without reluctance in any path that is prescribed to them; and a springing emulation, joined to a conscious sense of gradual improvement, gives force and constancy to their pursuits. The objects of their application seem important; not only from the novelty of them, and the authority of those who have the direction of their studies, but chiefly perhaps from a confused sense of their value, much above what they would entertain, were they able to form a true and distinct judgment of them.

This, then, is the season for laying the foundations of knowledge and ability of every kind; and if you let it slip, without applying it carefully to those purposes, you will in vain lament the omission in riper years, when the cares or amusements of life afford little leisure for such pursuits, and less inclination.

There may have been some few examples of those, whose superior industry in advanced age has atoned for the defects of their education,

But in general the *man* depends intirely on the *boy*; and he is all his life long, what the impressions, he received in his early years, have made him[f]. If therefore any considerable part of this precious season be *wasted* in foreign travel, I mean if it be actually *not employed* in the pursuits proper to it, this circumstance must needs be considered as an objection of great weight to that sort of education.

Your Lordship may consider, *next*, the DISSIPATION OF MIND attending on this itinerant education; while the scene is constantly changing; and new objects perpetually springing up before him, to solicit the admiration of our young traveller.

One of the greatest secrets in education is, to fix the attention of youth: a painful operation! which requires long use and a steady unremitting discipline; the very reverse of that roving, desultory habit, which is inseparable from the sort of life you would recommend. The young mind is naturally impatient of constraint: it hates to be confined for any time in

[f] Ἃ δ' ἂν μάθοι τις, ταῦτα σώζεσθαι φιλεῖ
Πρὸς γῆρας. ἕτω παῖδας εὖ παιδεύειε.
Eurip. ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ.

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the same track; and is flying out, at every turn, from the proper subject of its meditation. Instead of counteracting this native infirmity, you indulge and flatter it; till, by degrees, the mind loses its tone and vigour, and is utterly incapable of paying a due attention to any thing.

I insist the more on this consideration, because in acquiring the elements of learning it is of great importance that the learner proceed uniformly in the course on which he has entered. It may now and then be the privilege of a genius, to seize the principles of knowledge at once, and to grow wise, as we may say, by intuition. But the common sort of minds are of another make. It is by slow steps only that they arrive at knowledge; and, if you stop or divert their progress, their labour is all thrown away, or yields at best a shallow, superficial, and ill-digested learning.

But were no account to be had of *the loss of time*, or of *this dissipated turn of mind*, which is still more pernicious, I should nevertheless object to this travelled education, on account of the very objects to which our traveller's APPLICATION is directed.

Instead of those necessary and fundamental parts of knowledge, which I require him to have laid in, his attention, so much of it as can be spared for any thing that looks like information, is wasted on things either frivolous or unimportant.

His *first* business is, to make himself perfect in the forms of breeding, which he finds in use among those he lives with, or perhaps in their forms of dress only.

His *next* concern is, to acquire a readiness in the languages of *Europe;* or, to shorten his labour as much as possible, at least in the *French* language. The pretence is, that he may fit himself for conversation with his foreign acquaintance; which takes up much time to little purpose, as the use ceases, in a good degree, with his return home: and, that he may qualify himself for perusing their best books; which takes him off from the study of those which are still better; in the learned languages, and I will venture to say, in his own.

If any thing *further* employ his attention, it is perhaps a little virtuosoship. He inquires after fine pictures, fine statues, fine buildings.

DIALOGUE VIII. He visits the shops of artificers; gets admission to libraries, cabinets of medals, and repositories of curiosities; and, for some relaxation from these arduous toils, is frequent at Churches, Theatres, and Courts of Judicature, and stares at processions, ceremonies, and other solemn shews.

And, now, when these three points have been duly attended to, I leave your Lordship to guess what leisure he is likely to have for accomplishing himself in those other studies, which you allow me to suppose are of much greater importance.

In one word, my Lord, if he acquires any knowledge, it is only, or chiefly, of such things as he may very well do without, or, at best, are of an inferior and subordinate consideration: while the branches of learning, he must neglect for these, are of the most constant use and necessity to him in the commerce of his whole life.

Till then your Lordship can find a way to reconcile these different pursuits, I must be of opinion that the boasted way of travel is the worst that can be contrived for the proper instruction of our young countrymen.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

Without doubt, if these less important points engross all their attention. But can there be a difficulty in carrying on the two designs together; especially, if a good and attentive tutor be at hand to direct his pupil's pursuit and quicken his application?

MR. LOCKE.

Your Lordship, like the friends and parents of a young traveller, is for exacting wonders at the hands of this important personage, a tutor. But the truth is, so many, and so different things cannot be well learned, even with the advantage of the best parts under the very best direction.

Besides, your Lordship forgets that what we now inquire into, is, whether the generality of our *English* youth of quality should be educated in this form; not, whether two or three young men, of the most uncommon genius and application, may not possibly succeed in it. I demand an education, which may ordinarily produce useful and able men: your

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Lordship is providing only for, what comes of itself, a prodigy.

And now, my Lord, with this preparation, I think myself enabled to reply distinctly to the several arguments you alleged for the expediency of foreign travel. It is very clear, that the most solid advantages are lost by it. But perhaps we shall find a recompense for this loss, in the shewy and ornamental accomplishments, which travel promises; and which your Lordship supposes the world will readily, and with reason, accept instead of them.

These accomplishments are summed up in the BENEFITS of an enlarged society and conversation; which, again, branch out into many heads; and under different names, furnished, I think, the substance, as well as governed the method, of your vindication.

This was the polite and popular theme, which you chose to dress out in all the colours of your eloquence. To make way for these, and to lay them on with more effect, your Lordship was pleased to tell us a very melancholy story. *England*, it seems, is over-run with barbarism and ignorance; its inhabitants are rude and uncivilized; and nothing can be

learnt among them, which is fit to appear in good company. DIALOGUE VIII.

If this had been said of our forefathers in CÆSAR's time, or even in good King EDGAR's, when the land, they say, was over-run with wolves (by which, I suppose, the monkish mythology means *men*, as savage); I could have found but little, it may be, to oppose to the accusation. But at this time of the day, when arts and letters have at least made some progress among us; when commerce has extended our acquaintance with the rudest parts of the globe, and policy strengthened our connexions with the most civilized; when our country is filled with large flourishing towns, and even prides itself in a vast, opulent, and splendid metropolis; I could not but think the charge was a little aggravated, or that your Lordship had forgotten to speak of *England*, as it now subsists, in the close of the seventeenth century. It seemed to me as if the *English* might now, at least, deserve to be considered as *men*; and that in our courts and camps, if not in our colleges, we might stand a chance of finding what your Lordship would not disdain to qualify with the name of *gentlemen*.

DIALOGUE VIII.

But the other representation was more favourable to your Lordship's cause: and out of that representation arose the several BARBARITIES, with which you thought fit to mortify and alarm us.

The first fire of your zeal is spent on that swarm of PREJUDICES, with which our *English*, or at least provincial, youth are commonly over-run.

PREJUDICES, my Lord, is an equivocal term; and may as well mean right opinions taken upon trust, and deeply rooted in the mind, as false and absurd opinions, so derived and grown into it.

The *former* of these will do no hurt; on the contrary, perhaps, the very best part of education is employed in the culture of them.

But admit, they are of the *latter* sort: still they may be only the excesses of right principles and notions. And in that case, I should doubt whether the evil be of consequence enough to deserve your indignation. Perhaps no man has enough of certain virtues, that does not carry them something too far. The just degree, the precise mean, is a nice point

to hit. The condition of our common nature is such, that we either overshoot the mark, or fall short of it; and your Lordship easily apprehends which is the more convenient as well as more generous part, in this moral archery. DIALOGUE VIII.

Besides, reflexion and experience will come in, soon enough to moderate these excesses. So that, for my part, though our young patriot should happen to entertain the extravagant conceit, you diverted yourself with, of the soil and climate of *Old England*, I should take that for no great objection to his home-breeding, and should, possibly, not be over-forward to disabuse him of such honest errors.

Surely, my Lord, there are certain *associations* of ideas, which, however oddly formed, your Lordship would be something loth to undo.

To take your own instance: What if the ideas of liberty chanced to be closely connected with those of *Old England;* so as, by the magic of this union, to convert her rude heaths and barren mountains into pleasurable landskips; would you be forward, if you had it in your power, to dissolve this charm, and, by setting those objects in their true and proper

DIALOGUE VIII. light, disenchant the mind, at the same time, from the idea, or warm love at least, of *English* liberty?

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

You know well, I perceive, how to chuse your instances. The force of this, you suppose, will hardly be lost on him, who professes himself an adorer of that liberty. But, under favour, I see no such inconvenience, as you suggest, in putting asunder two things which truth and nature had no hand in bringing together. LIBERTY has charms enough to attach the mind, wherever the place of her abode be; and I have never heard that the loveliness of her form is impaired, or even disgraced, by the homeliness of her habitation.

MR. LOCKE.

It may be so; and the reason, as in the case of the more selfish affections, is, That the habitation of our idol, whatever be our worship, is rarely thought homely. But convince us that our country is scarce worth contending for, and, as lovely as its Goddess Liberty may ap-

pear to enamoured eyes, the generality of her votaries will, I doubt, be something slack in her defence. DIALOGUE VIII.

But, after all, an illustration must not be questioned at this rate. It is enough, that your Lordship sees I am not for discarding Principles, under the opprobrious name of Prejudices. The tender minds of youth are to be treated with indulgence. If they put forth too fast, and too luxuriantly, let the ordinary methods of culture be applied to them. A little dressing and pruning, at fit seasons, may do more good, than *transplanting*: a fatal experiment, in many cases; which, in checking the immoderate vigour of its growth, kills the tree, or, at best, brings on a languishing and dwarfish imbecillity.

If, indeed, by Prejudices you mean *vicious principles*, properly so called; that is, vicious in themselves, as well as in the degree: these, it is certain, must be rooted up; and the sooner, the better: but then there is no need of crossing the seas for the benefit of such an operation.

For the proper cure of such prejudices, as I take it, is to be made by the application of

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those truths that are common to all climes; not by the partial manners or opinions which arise out of them in this or that more polished society.

But your Lordship, I observed, as though you had taken up this charge of Prejudices purely to introduce the satire on *Old England*, was content to drop it, as soon as it had served your turn. You exchanged it, however, for *another* of more importance, THE LOW, SORDID, AND IMMORAL HABITS; which strike into the lives and manners of our youth, and are, as you conceive, epidemical and incurable in this Island.

It may true, that too much of the complaint is well-founded. The taste of our provincial gentry may be something coarse; and their houses, none of the best schools of civility and politeness: so that low and even immoral habits may be, and, I doubt, too often are, the fruit of an ordinary domestic education. But then what remedy does your Lordship prescribe for the removal of them? Why, you send them abroad with all their imperfections upon their heads; to get rid of their bad habits, as they can, and to pick up better, as they will: or, do you perhaps imagine that the ill

qualities, they take out with them, will drop off, of themselves? and that the good ones they stand in need of, like new leaves in the spring, will immediately put forth and take their places? DIALOGUE VIII.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

I do but imagine, that bad habits are only to be expelled by better; and that therefore the readiest way for our countrymen to get quit of their ill manners, is, to force them into good company. And, with your leave, I see nothing very absurd or unreasonable in this imagination.

MR. LOCKE.

Certainly not, in prescribing good habits as a cure for bad ones. But your Lordship had done well to shew what there is in a foreign air, that is so propitious to good habits, as that none but such can thrive in it; or, if there be a mixture of good and bad, as with us, how your traveller shall be secured against an ill choice. Otherwise our young spark may pick up new habits indeed; but they may only be different from what he took from home, not better or more reasonable.

DIALOGUE VIII. I doubt, my Lord, that, when such rude and untutored boys find themselves removed from that restraint which the eye of a parent, though but little accustomed to civility himself, imposed upon them, they will rather give way to a freer indulgence of their own froward humours, than be in any disposition to check and reform them. What inclination will such persons have to benefit by good company? or how indeed will they gain admittance into it?

I appeal to your own observation, whether, when this sort of ill-educated people get abroad, and settle for a time in some frequented city, their usual way be not to keep at distance from the better company of the place, and to flock together into little knots and clubs of their own countrymen, or of such others as are most resembling in taste and manners to themselves; where all their low humours are freely indulged, and even inflamed, by the mutual society and countenance of one another. This, your Lordship knows, is most frequently the case; while the obsequious tutor is at length more likely to be swayed by the importunity, and perverted by the ill example, of his disciples, than they are to be restrained by his advice and authority.

But, though foreign travel should be indeed a remedy for the mischiefs, complained of, I still question whether it would be a *proper* one. Suppose our young gentleman to be of so pliant a make, as to lay aside his rustic and illiberal habits in complaisance to the better company, he is obliged to live with: does it immediately follow, that he will adopt none but what are fit for him to assume; and, with so raw and undiscerning a judgment as he carried out with him, that he will have the skill to select only and assume such manners as are most becoming and ornamental?

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

As if one needs be in any pain, on that head; when the habits, I spoke of, are not only different from those he must assume abroad, but the very reverse of them!

MR. LOCKE.

Alas, your Lordship is not to be told, that the reverse of wrong is not always right. Even in the instance your Lordship puts, a young man may be polished indeed out of his rusti-

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city; yet, if he have no better rule to go by, than the fashion of the place where he lives, he may easily wear himself into the contrary defect, an effeminate and unmanly foppery. And, for the probability of such miscarriage, your Lordship is again referred to your own experience and observation.

As to what I take to be the proper remedy for these barbarities, that is another question, which I may afterwards find occasion to explain to you more at large. For the present, I must take leave to conclude, that, under the circumstances here supposed, foreign travel is generally an *insufficient*, always an *improper*, cure for them.

Your Lordship indeed goes further. You contend, that, if these sordid and dirty habits could by any means be expelled, still our *English* education is so essentially bad, that no liberal or graceful manners could be derived from it. And here your Lordship's rhetoric expatiates in full security. You seem confident that, though a method might be found out for making reasonable men, yet our home-breeding is absolutely incapable of furnishing fine gentlemen.

On this occasion it was, that the servile discipline of our schools, and the pedant tutorage of our colleges, afforded ample scope to your resentment. From an over-charged picture of both these, your Lordship finds means to dress up such a prodigy of ill manners, as must be the scorn, or pity, of all good company: which, to move our pity, or our scorn the more, your Lordship, I remember, took care to contrast to the easy, the assured, the all-sufficient air of a finished traveller. DIALOGUE VIII.

To this triumphant part of your harangue, I have only to oppose some plain and simple truths.

The awkward bashfulness of a young man is a sin which, I know, admits of no expiation, in good company. However, what good company will not pardon, it will soon remove. And, till that blessed time comes, let it *first* be considered that the modesty of ingenuous youth, though a terrible vice in itself, is yet favourable to some virtues. It is full of deference and respect; it preserves innocence; nourishes emulation; and, till reason be of age to take the rein into her hands, suspends and controuls all the passions. Nay, if it did nothing more than dispose a young man to

DISCOURSE VIII. observe much and talk little; even this advantage might be some recompence for the ill figure it gives him in the eyes of your Lordship's good company.

Have a care, my Lord, lest by taking off this restraint too soon, you emancipate your favoured youth from every principle of honour, and let him run headlong into worthlessness, dissolution, and ruin!

I know what the world is ready to think of this talk. But a truce with the world. I am a Philosopher, your Lordship knows: nay, your Lordship, too, is a Philosopher. Let us for once then hazard an unfashionable truth, that modesty in a young man is his grace and ornament; and that a confident young booby, not a bashful one, is the prodigy that needs the expiation.

Consider, *further*, my Lord, that bashfulness is not so much the effect of an ill education, as the proper gift and provision of wise nature. Every stage of life has its own set of manners, that is suited to it, and best becomes it. Each is beautiful in its season; and you might as well quarrel with the child's rattle, and advance him directly to the boy's top and

span-farthing, as expect from diffident youth the manly confidence of ripen age. DIALOGUE VIII.

Lamentable in the mean time, I am sensible, is the condition of my good Lady; who, especially if she be a mighty well-bred one, is perfectly shocked at the boy's awkwardness, and calls out on the taylor, the dancing-master, the player, the travelled tutor, any body and every body, to relieve her from the pain of so disgraceful an object.

She should however be told, if a proper season and words soft enough could be found to convey the information, that the odious thing, which disturbs her so much, is one of nature's signatures impressed on that age; that bashfulness is but the passage from one season of life to another; and that as the body is then the least graceful, when the limbs are making their last efforts and hastening to their just proportion, so the manners are the least easy and disengaged, when the mind, conscious and impatient of its imperfections, is stretching all its faculties to their full growth.

If I had the honour of her Ladyship's ear, I might further add, for her comfort, that as to this over-whelming modesty, which muffles

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merit, the boy, if she have but patience, will presently outgrow it, as he does his cloaths; that when this cloak of shame has done its work of warming and invigorating his young virtue, it may safely be laid aside, or rather will drop off of itself; and that, as poor and sheepish a thing as master now is, he may turn out, in the end, as forward a spark as the best of them.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

Fye, Mr. LOCKE; what, my philosopher give into this gaiety! he, who reproached me just now for the way of raillery and declamation!

MR. LOCKE.

Your Lordship does well to upbraid me for treating in so light a manner what deserves, indeed, the most indignant reproof. For, what is this endeavour to quench ingenuous shame, but a blasphemous attempt to counteract the designs of Providence, and obliterate, by main force, one of the most natural, as well as most precious, distinctions of early youth? Modesty is the blush of budding reason and virtue: and if art could succeed in the

preposterous project of forcing the fruit without the bud, not only this prime grace of the year would be lost, but the production itself, though it might be wondered at as a rarity, could never pretend to the flavour and ripeness of that which is of nature's own growth. DIALOGUE VIII.

In plain words, my Lord, modesty is the ornament of youth: and the earnest or rather the proper cause, of all that is excellent in riper age. It graces the boy, and, in due time, forms the man: whereas in suppressing this young virtue, you precipitate, indeed, a sort of manhood; which, yet, in effect, is only a perpetual boyism, or rather a portentous mixture of both states, without the virtues of either.

I am far from meaning by all this, and your Lordship will be as far from suspecting me to mean, that an easy unconstrained manner is not an amiable and agreeable thing. I am only for waiting the proper time of its appearance; which nature makes a little later than our impatient fancies are ready to prescribe to her.

Consider too this polite accomplishment, this supreme finishing of a well-formed cha-

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racter, can only be acquired, except in some extraordinary instances, by long incessant use and habit in conversation; which, besides the unfitness of the thing in other respects, would dissipate the young mind too much, and take it off from those other more important pursuits, which are proper to that age.

Nay, I might further say, and with much truth, that politeness, in your Lordship's, at least the court-sense of the word, is not to be attained by the ablest men; and when it is attainable, would generally do hurt, I mean beyond a certain degree, to its possessors.

No very great man was ever what the world calls, perfectly polite. Men of that stamp cannot afford such attention to little things, as is necessary to form and complete that character.

And even to men of a common make, that excessive sedulity about grace and manner, which constitutes the essence of good-breeding, would be injurious; as it tends to cramp their faculties, effeminate the temper, and break that force and vigour of mind which is requisite in a man of business for the discharge of his duty, in this free country.

So that, for any thing I see, this exquisite case of good breeding should be left to the ambition of still inferior spirits, of such indeed as are conscious to themselves of an incapacity for any other. DIALOGUE VIII.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

The concession is gracious; and the danger, no doubt, alarming, lest our senators and men of business should be disabled for their high functions by an excess of good manners. Yet 'tis some consolation, that at present I see no symptoms of that enfeebling politeness among such of the ornaments of either house, as I have the honour to be acquainted with.

MR. LOCKE.

Your Lordship may divert yourself as you think fit, with an old man's fears. But if this mode of travelling, which has taken so much with us since the peace[g], should continue for any time, the day may come but too soon, when these fancies of mine will be realized:

[g] Of *Ryswick*, in 1697.

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when politeness shall be fatal to ability of every kind; and, at least in the higher ranks of life, when our countrymen shall be too well bred to be good for any thing.

And now, having ventured so far, shall I proceed one step further, and take to myself the privilege of an old man, to express my sense of this whole matter, a little unfashionably? The mighty value, that is set upon manners, comes, as I have already hinted, from a quarter, which, though it may imprint respect on a person of your Lordship's age and gallantry, must not pretend to be so much considered by grey heirs. If you can forgive the liberty, I will then, at length, speak out, and say, They are the ladies, only, or chiefly, that have affixed such an idea of merit to this envied quality of good-breeding; and that, as appearances are thought to sway full enough with that delicate sex, they may perhaps have advanced the credit of it something higher than such an accomplishment deserves.

And when I further consider the mighty influence which these fair dispensers of reputation must needs have on our gallant and courtly youth, I cannot wonder that the mode of foreign travel is become so fashionable. Nay, I

am half inclined to suppose, that, in this debate between us, I have rather your politeness to contend with, than your judgment: and that, if your Lordship would deal roundly with me, your answer on this occasion would be the same with HIS, who, (as I have heard you tell the story) being questioned by his friends why a person of his acknowledged sense and bravery would accept the challenge of a coxcomb, thought it vindication enough of himself to reply, "that, for the *men*, he could "safely trust their judgment; but how should "he appear, at night, before the *maids of* "*honour*[h]?

Whether I presume too much in this fancy, is not material. It is enough to say, that what there is of use or beauty in polite carriage will come of itself, with a little experience of the world and good company; and shall not, with my consent, be purchased at the expence of far better things.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

Nor with mine: for, with all the courtliness and gallantry you make me master of, I never

[h] *Advice to an Author*, P. II. S. III.

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intended by the *good company*, I mentioned with so much respect, either those foolish men, or women, who prefer the forward assurance of their boys to every other consideration. I only think that a reasonable attention to the manners of our noble youth is a matter of much consequence; as early impressions of this sort are necessary to fit them for the commerce of the world, from which alone they can hope to derive their best and most solid instruction: and your gaiety on the fair sex must not restrain me from agreeing with them, in this instance, that I see not how that world can be read and studied, as it ought to be, without travelling.

MR. LOCKE.

Yes; now your Lordship comes to an important point indeed. From the polish of manners, the least considerable, and the easiest to be attained of all the parts of good breeding, your Lordship, as I now remember, rose at once to a subject of real consequence, I mean, THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD; a science, as you well termed it, the most profound and useful. And if this MASTER-SCIENCE were to be acquired by means of early travel, our

young gentleman should have my consent to shut up his books, and set forth on his adventures, directly. DIALOGUE VIII.

But, good my Lord, consider with yourself the difficulty of this study; the ripeness of age and judgment necessary for entering upon it; much more, for making a real progress in it.

And why, as I before hinted, will your Lordship be so impatient to come at the end, without the means? Why, in such haste to build up men, when nature has allotted a season for their being boys?

Without doubt, if our youth could start up men, at once, armed at all points, as the fable has it, and thoroughly furnished for the business of life, we should gladly accept this benefit, and might then be content to overlook or suppress all the cares of education. But this is not the condition of humanity. Its improvements of every kind are slow and gradual. Time and attention form each; and it is only through the right application of preceding states, that we arrive, at length, at the maturity of human wisdom. Let the child and boy be allowed to perfect themselves in what

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belongs to those conditions, and it will then be time enough to provide for the manly character.

Reflect with yourself, my Lord. When the young unfurnished traveller is carried out into the world, with no principles to poize his conduct, no maxims to direct his judgment, what can be expected from this untimely enterprize? what, but fluctuating morals, and fortuitous deliberations? He has not so much as the idea of what constitutes *man*. How then should he obtain any real and useful knowledge of the human character?

If by a knowledge of the world, be only meant a knowledge of the external modes and customs of it, this, no doubt, were best acquired by surveying them as they present themselves in the various tribes and societies of mankind. But your Lordship means more than this: you understand a knowledge of a higher kind; such as respects the creature *man*, considered in his essential parts, his *reason* and his *passions*. This is a different kind of study, my Lord, from that other. Any one that has eyes, is qualified to observe the shapes and masks of men; but to penetrate their interior frame, to inspect their proper

dispositions and characters, is the business of a well-informed and well-disciplined understanding. DIALOGUE VIII.

Can your Lordship seriously expect that a young boy should comprehend the effect, which government, policy, institution, and other circumstances of life, have on the pliant reason of mankind? or that he should have the skill to disentangle the various folds and intricacies, in which their real characters lie involved, through the insidious and discordant working of the passions? He should surely know what truth and reason is, before he can derive any benefit to himself from the discourse of men: and he should have carefully watched the movements of his own heart, before he presume to analyze, as your Lordship expressed it, the characters of others.

You see, then, the unseasonableness and inutility of foreign travel, as to the case in hand, even on the supposition that our traveller were admitted into what is called, the best company. But how shall this privilege be obtained? In what country can it be thought that the politeness of eminent men will condescend to a free and intimate communication with boys, of whatever promising hopes, or illustrious

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quality? Certain slight and formal civilities, your Lordship knows, are the utmost that can be looked for; and are indeed the whole of what our ill-prepared traveller is capable.

Your Lordship did well to remind me of such societies as those in which you and I have, at times, been engaged. The recollection is, of course, flattering and agreeable. But let us presume upon ourselves, my Lord; the LIMBORCHS and LE CLERCS are not so obvious to every body, as they were to us; or, if they were, every body would not profit so well by them. And if private scholars be thus inaccessible, how shall we think to intrude on the business and occupations of experienced magistrates and ministers? And, putting both these out of the question, who remain for the tutorage and instruction of these travelled boys, but such raw, unaccomplished companions, as they left at home, and may find every where in abundance?

Still my objections go further. What if, by uncommon sagacity and good luck, some acquaintance be made with superior persons, and some little insight at length be gained into their real characters? Of what mighty advantage will this be in life, when their business

lies amongst other men; and when the same industry and attention had brought them acquainted with the characters of those, they must act and live with? Foreigners are neither an easier study than our own countrymen, nor a more useful one. The very modes and forms of external breeding catch the attention of unexperienced youth; and are so many obstacles to their real progress in this science. And, when all is done, the modifications of the human character, as existing at home, and exhibited in the lives and actions of their fellow-citizens, are, as I said, the proper objects of their curiosity.

In short, the utmost I can allow to this discipline of foreign travel, under the idea of its furnishing *a knowledge of the world*, is, That it may possibly wear a young man into some studied and apish resemblance of the models, he copies from, in his deportment and manners; or that the various scenes, he has passed through, may furnish matter, at his return, for much unprofitable babble in conversation: but, that he should come back fraught with any solid information concerning men and things, such as, in your Lordship's sublime phrase, may fit him to appear with lustre in the court or senate of his own

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country, is what I can never promise myself from this fashionable mode of education.

I am even disposed to promise myself the less from it, for an *observation*, I have sometimes had the opportunity of making.

An old man has so little about him to provoke envy, that he may be allowed to make the best of his former successes. And though I pride myself in *one*, of a very delicate nature, the boast of it will not be ill taken even there, where your Lordship, with all your pretensions, would be heard with no patience. In short, I indulge myself in the vanity of saying that I have, in my time, been well with the fair sex, and have even been countenanced so far as to be admitted into a degree of acquaintance and familiarity with some ladies of the highest quality and distinction. And of these, I have constantly observed, that, though bred up at home, they had a manifest advantage over their travelled brothers, I was going to say, in learning and science, but certainly in true politeness, good sense, and even a knowledge of the world.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

I understand this civility to the ladies, as a decent atonement for your late freedoms with them. In this light I should be unwilling to cavil at it: and yet I see not, how your high encomiums on the superior good sense and politeness of these home-bred ladies can consist with the passion, you before censured in them, for foreign travel, as favourable, in their opinion, to the production of such virtues.

MR. LOCKE.

My consistency in this representation, I doubt, is less questionable, than my civility. For the ladies, on whom I bestowed those high, but just encomiums, were chiefly such as I had known in my younger days, before the passion for travel had got among them. Now indeed the case is altering apace, and the effects are answerable. The virtues of the *English* ladies, when they staid at home, were more conspicuous than those of our travelled gentlemen. Now that they, too, begin to travel, their follies are, also, more glaring: in either case, I am willing

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to own, for the credit of my civility, from the same reason, that both good and ill qualities strike us most, when *set* in the precious metal of that sex.

However, from the whole of my experience, I must needs conclude, that this finishing of a travelled education only serves to corrupt good qualities, or inflame bad ones.

But the ladies are not in my province. If they were, a knowledge of the world is not the leading virtue I might wish to see them possessed of. In the men, I confess, this accomplishment is of more importance; and I am therefore solicitous, that no well-meaning youth, whom it so much concerns to gain a knowledge of the world, should be misled in his search of it.

Seriously, my Lord, the WORLD, which I am forced to repeat so often, is a solemn word, and the study of it has an air of something plausible and imposing. But those, who know what the world is, will think it best that a young man begin with what is the first and last concern of every man, the study of himself; and if, in due time, he come to understand, and, still more, to value as they deserve,

the characters of the great and good men of his own country, the opprobrious name of *home-bred* will not hinder him from acquiring the best fruit, with which a knowledge of the world, rightly understood, can furnish him. DIALOGUE VIII.

For, my Lord, I must not, on so inviting an occasion as this, conceal an odd fancy of mine from your Lordship.

The affair of *knowing the world*, about which weak and fantastic people make so much noise, and which one hears them perpetually insisting upon with so much sufficiency, is of all others the nicest and most momentous step that is made in education. And, though volumes have been written to teach us how we may best become scholars, orators, courtiers, what not; yet not one leaf do I ever remember to have seen, composed by any capable man, that instructs us in the proper way of getting into this great secret.

It is not a matter to be entered upon, if I were vain enough to think myself capable of it, in this casual conversation; but thus much I may presume to say, that whoever designs to let a young man into a safe and useful knowledge of the world, must do it in a way very

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remote from that which has hitherto been taken.

A young man, they tell us, must know the world; therefore, say they, push him into it at once, that he may acquire that knowledge, which his own experience, and not another's, must procure for him.

I, on the other hand, take upon me to say, Therefore keep him out of that world, as long as you can; and when you commit him to it, let the ablest friend or tutor lend him his best experience, to conduct him gradually, cautiously, imperceptibly, into an acquaintance with it.

You ask the reason of this mysterious procedure; yet methinks it should be obvious enough. From *sixteen to one and twenty* (a period, in which the cares of an ordinary education cease, or are much relaxed) is that precise season of life, which requires all the attention of the most vigilant, and all the address of the wisest, governor. The passions are then opening; curiosity awake; and the young mind ready to take its ply from the seducements of fashion, and creditable example.

Nor is this the worst. An education, that deserves the name, has inculcated maxims of honour and probity; has inspired the noblest sentiments of moral duty; has impressed on the mind a veneration for all the virtues, and an equal horror for all the vices, of humanity.

Full of these sublime ideas, which his parents, his tutors, his books, and even his own ingenuous heart has rendered familiar to him, the fatal time is at hand, when our well-instructed youth is now to make his entrance into the world: but, good God, what a world! not that which he has so long read, or dreamt of; but a world, new, strange, and inconsistent with all his former notions and expectations.

He enters this scene with awe; and contemplates it with astonishment. Vice, he sees assured, prosperous, and triumphant; virtue discountenanced, unsuccessful, and degraded. He joins the first croud, that presents itself to him: a loud laugh arises; and the edge of their ridicule is turned on sobriety, industry, honesty, generosity, or some other of those qualities, he has hitherto been most fond of.

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He quits this clamorous set with disdain; and is glad to unite himself with *another*, better dressed, better mannered, in all respects more specious and attractive. His simplicity makes him for some time the dupe of this plausible society: but their occasional hints, their negligent sarcasms, their sallies of wit, and polite raillery on all that he has been accustomed to hold sacred, shew him at last that he has only changed his company, not mended it.

This discovery leads him to another. He attends to the lives of these well-bred people, and finds them of a piece with their manners and conversation; shewy indeed, and, on first view, decorous; but, in effect, deformed by every impotent and selfish passion; wasted in sloth and luxury; in ruinous play; criminal intrigues; or, at best, unprofitable amusements.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

This painting, methinks, is a little strong. Besides, you might surely have provided better company for your young inspector of the world, than that shameless crew, or this corrupt one.

MR. LOCKE.

I take up, as he must do, with such company as the world is most apt to throw in our way; and the colouring, your Lordship knows, is modest enough for the occasion.

But I attend our boy-adventurer no further in his progress into the world, and return now to ask you, what effect your Lordship thinks these strange unexpected scenes must naturally have upon him? Certainly one or other of these two; either that the scorn of virtue, he every where observes, will by degrees abate his reverence of it, and at length obliterate all the better impressions of his education; or, if these should still keep their hold of his young ingenuous breast, that he will entertain the most indignant sentiments of mankind, and suffer himself to be carried by them into a sour and sullen misanthropy, at least; perhaps into a sceptical and prophane impiety.

I have seldom known a young man of sense and parts, educated in this way, escape from one or other of these mischiefs.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

But why then bring him up with those high notions of mankind, of which the world must presently disabuse him, at the expence either of his innocence, or good nature?

MR. LOCKE.

That question had been natural enough from most men. But your Lordship knows very well, that, in this moral discipline, as in every other, ideas of excellence are to be imprinted on the young mind, and the most consummate models proposed for imitation: on this certain principle, That, whoever would be moderately accomplished in any art, and most of all in this supreme art of life, must take his aim high, and aspire to absolute perfection. A painter or statuary of the lowest form, your Lordship knows, is taught to work after a MADONNA *of* RAPHAEL, or a VENUS *of* MEDICIS; yet is not likely to meet with either, among his acquaintance.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

The observation is surely just; and I could only mean that those high fancies should be checked and moderated in due time, before our entrance into that world, which, it is foreseen, will so little correspond to them.

MR. LOCKE.

And what is that *due time*, your Lordship sets apart for this delicate operation?

Is it, before the young boy commences his travels? But that, according to your Lordship's scheme, is so early, that the regimen, you would now abate, has not taken its full effect, and his weak unconfirmed virtue would die under the experiment.

Is it then, when his travels are already begun? And is the sage tutor, your Lordship anxiously flies to, as to some god, on every occasion of distress, to charge himself with the solution of this difficulty? Alas! now it is too late. You have brought the boy into the

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scene. He will see and judge for himself. The torrent bears him away: the instant impression is too strong to be counteracted by the feeble and, now, disgusting admonitions of a tutor.

See then, if the proper way, to secure him from these inconveniences, be not, To keep him yet at a distance from the world; and, when you let him into some knowledge of it, to do it seasonably, gradually, and circumspectly: to take the veil off from some parts, and leave it still upon others; to paint what he does not see, and to hint at more than you paint: to confine him, at first, to the best company, and prepare him to make allowances even for the best: to preserve in his breast the love of excellence, and encourage in him the generous sentiments, he has so largely imbibed, and so perfectly relishes: yet temper, if you can, his zeal with candour; insinuate to him the prerogative of such a virtue, as his, so early formed, and so happily cultivated; and bend his reluctant spirit to some aptness of pity towards the ill-instructed and the vicious: by degrees to open to him the real condition of that world, to which he is approaching; yet so as to present to him, at the same time, the certain inevitable misery of conform-

ing to it: last of all, to shew him some examples of that vice, which he must learn to bear in others, though detest in himself; to watch the effect these examples have upon him; and, as you find his dispositions incline, to fortify his abhorrence of vice, or excite his commiseration of the vicious: in a word (for I am not now directing a tutor, but suggesting, in very general terms, my ideas of his office) to inform the minds of youth with such gradual intelligence, as may prepare them to see the world without surprize, and live in it without danger. DIALOGUE VIII.

This is that important chapter, which I presumed to say no institutor of youth had yet composed, or so much as touched upon, in a treatise of education. You will learn from this brief summary of its contents, what, in my opinion, should be the employment of those precious years, which are usually thrown away upon foreign travel.

In earnest, my Lord, there is a fatal mistake in this matter. People speak of a knowledge of the world, as what may be acquired at any time, and, for its importance, cannot be acquired too soon. Alas! they forget, that a long and careful preparation is necessary, before we are qualified so much as to enter on

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this task; and that they, who are latest in setting out, will arrive the soonest, certainly the safest, at their journey's end.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

But where shall this mighty work of preparation be carried on? And in what privileged sanctuary shall our good young man be kept from the sight and contagion of this wicked world, and yet be gradually forming for the use and practice of it?

MR. LOCKE.

Where, does your Lordship ask? Why, in his college; in a friend's, or his father's house; any where, in short, rather than in a foreign country, where every wholesome restraint is taken off, and the young mind left a prey to every ill impression.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

And are there no inconveniences, on the other hand, which a provident parent may be

supposed to foresee, and may be willing to guard against? DIALOGUE VIII.

MR. LOCKE.

I understand your Lordship. I know, that, for want of better arguments in support of this foreign breeding, weak or unworthy parents are ready to take up with such as these:

They tell us, especially if of rank and quality, that their children have suffered more than enough already, in their passage through our public and vulgar schools; that, together with many illiberal habits, they have contracted many low and illiberal friendships, which are, in all reason, to be shaken off; that these unworthy companions follow them to the University, and are, if not the bane, yet the dishonour and incumbrance of their future lives; that an absence of some years abroad loosens these hasty and ill-timed connexions; and leaves them, on their return, at full liberty to contract others, more suitable to their birth and quality, and more conducive to their views of fortune, as well as of reputation, in the world; that indeed they might remove the young man immediately from his school into their own house; but that much of their time is necessarily spent in the metropolis, the licence of which is not

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to be guarded against by any care of their own, or of the best governor; that his low illiberal acquaintance would haunt him even there; at least, that the youth of his own age and rank would naturally flock about him, and, under a thousand pretences of civility or amusement, engage him in all the follies, and perhaps the vices, of this great town; that, on the whole, his only refuge from these mischiefs is in the way of foreign travel; whence, at length, he may return in riper age and with better judgement to take his station in the world.

To this popular talk (which your Lordship, I suppose, glanced at, but would not condescend to enforce directly) it is enough to reply, that part of the inconveniences, here enumerated, are feigned at pleasure, and the rest exaggerated; that the authority of a father, if he deserve that name, in concurrence with honest friends and an ordinary governor, will prevent them all, or at least palliate them; and that, to take matters at the worst, his son will be exposed to still greater inconveniences any where else. But in truth I cannot see, if a college be excepted against, and the business be to see the world, as it is called, why *London* should not be esteemed as fit a scene for the purpose, as any other great town in *Eu-*

rope. I think it contains as much good company as any other; and I doubt whether it be more licentious; or, if it be, there are three restraints upon it, which, I am sure, will not be found abroad: I mean, "the parental authority;" "domestic government;" and "a regard to reputation, under the eye and notice of his friends."

So that, in every view, whether on your Lordship's plan, of entering directly on the great study of the world, or on mine, of only preparing for it, our young man cannot possibly do better, at his years, than stay at home; where, if your Lordship please, we will then leave him; at least, till we have tried the force of your next, and, as I remember, LAST argument in behalf of foreign travel, "which arose "out of the mighty benefits, supposed to at-"tend the study and cultivation of what are "called the FINE ARTS; in short, from the "lustre and importance of the virtuoso cha-"racter."

Your Lordship, who has so acknowledged a taste in these things, and of course has so exquisite a sense of their value, may be excused for enlarging so particularly on this head. But to me, who am of a plainer make and cooler

DIALOGUE VIII.

disposition, they appear, if not frivolous, yet of little importance, when compared with those other things, which are the proper and more immediate objects of education.

It would, I doubt, disgust your Lordship, should I speak my mind freely of them; or even insinuate, that I take these studies, when entered upon in early youth, and proposed as matters of serious pursuit and application, to have indeed the most pernicious tendency; as breaking the nerves and force of the mind, and inspiring I know not what of a trifling and superfluous vanity.

To render these pursuits serviceable in any degree, or even harmless, they should in all reason be postponed to riper years, when the confirmed judgment will of course take them but for what they are, for nothing more than elegant and polite amusements.

Not to insist, that to excel in this species of taste, as in all others, a previous foundation is required, of reflexion and good sense: for I agree with your favourite poet; of every polite study and indulgence even of the imagination,

SAPERE, *est et principium et fons,*

These and still stronger objections might be made to your partiality for the *fine arts*. But I am contented to wave them all; as indeed they would come with an ill grace from one, who must acknowledge himself to have no particular skill or discernment in them, and who should not therefore presume to enter the lists with so consummate a master of them as your Lordship.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

And so, under the cover of a civil speech, you escape from the most specious, at least, of those arguments, which are alleged in favour of an early travelled education. For, whether it be true, or no, that other accomplishments may be as well acquired at home, it is past a doubt that the polite and liberal arts can only be learnt abroad. And of their use and ornament to our noble youth—

MR. LOCKE.

Your Lordship, I know, can say more, and finer things, than you expect I should seriously dispute with you, on this occasion.

DIALOGUE VIII.

I have now, my Lord, (at least if my old memory has not betrayed me) gone over the several heads and topics of your defence; and said enough, I believe, on each, to shew that foreign travel is not, on whatever side we view it, the most proper method of a young gentleman's education.

The benefits, you propose by it, are either of small account in themselves, at least of much less account than those you must sacrifice to them; or, when their importance is real and confessed, may be attained more conveniently in some other way, and at some other season.

For, after all I have said, your Lordship is not to conclude that I am wholly bent against the practice of foreign travel. I am as sensible, as any man, of its important use, when undertaken at a proper time and by fit persons. For, though I esteem it idleness, and something worse, for a young boy to waste his prime and most precious years in saunt̃ering round *Europe*, yet I know what ends of wisdom and of virtue may be answered by a capable man's survey of it.

But then, my Lord, I reckon that capacity at no vulgar rate. He must be of worth and consideration enough to be received into the wisest, nay the greatest company. His natural insight into men and things must be quick and penetrating. His faculties must all be at their height; his studies matured; and his reading and observation extensive. With these accomplishments, if a man of rank and fortune can find leisure to employ a few years among the neighbouring nations, I readily agree, his voyage may turn out to his own benefit, and to that of his country.

In this way it may be true, as your Lordship insisted, that our island prejudices will be usefully worn off, and much real civility and politeness be imported among us.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

I thank you for this concession. Although I cannot yet be convinced of the total impropriety of an earlier voyage, I am pleased to find you do not interdict the thing isself. Many wise persons among us have even talked at that rate. But you are more reasonable; and indeed that extravagance was not to be ap-

DIALOGUE VIII. prehended from your true sense and superior knowledge of human nature.

MR. LOCKE.

I have that esteem of your Lordship's kind opinion, as to be very unwilling to forfeit any share of it. Yet what I have now to advance will, I readily foresee, expose me to some risk, in that particular.

For now your Lordship has expressed your regard for *a superior knowledge of human nature*, it emboldens me to add that such knowledge (which I have small right to claim to myself) is not to be acquired but by the largest and most extensive observation of the human species: so that I may be found at last even a warmer advocate for the uses of foreign travel, than your Lordship.

I hold then that the knowledge of human nature (the only knowledge, in the largest sense of the expression, deserving a wise man's regard) can never be well attained but by seeing it under all its appearances; I mean, not merely, or chiefly, in that fair and well-dressed form it wears amid the arts and embel-

lishments of our western world; but in its naked simplicity, and even deformities; nay, under all its disguises and distortions, arising from absurd governments and monstrous religions, in every distant region and quarter of the globe. DIALOGUE VIII.

The subject appears to me of that importance, that it almost warms me, an old philosopher as I am, into some emulation of your Lordship's enthusiasm.

I would say then, "that, to study HUMAN "NATURE to purpose, a traveller must enlarge "his circuit beyond the bounds of *Europe*. "He must go, and catch her undressed, nay "quite naked, in *North-America*, and at the "Cape of *Good Hope*. He may then examine "how she appears crampt, contracted, and "buttoned up close in the strait tunic of law and custom, as in *China* and *Japan*: or, "spread out and enlarged above her common "size, in the loose and flowing robe of enthu-"siasm, among the Arabs and Saracens: or, "lastly, as she flutters in the old rags of worn-"out policy and civil government, and almost "ready to run back naked to the deserts, as "on the *Mediterranean* coast of *Africa*."

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These, my Lord, are the proper scenes for the philosopher, for the citizen of the world, to expatiate in. The tour of *Europe* is a paltry thing: a tame, uniform, unvaried prospect: which affords nothing but the same polished manners and artificial policies, scarcely diversified enough to take, or merit, our attention.

It is from a wider and more extensive view of mankind that a just estimate is to be made of the powers of human nature. Hence we collect what its genuine faculties are: what ideas and principles, or if any, are truly innate and essential to it; and what changes and modification it is susceptible of from law and custom.

If you think I impose too great a task on our inquisitive traveller, my next advice is, That he stay at home: read *Europe* in the mirror of his own country, which but too eagerly reflects and flatters every state that dances before its surface; and, for the rest, take up with the best information he can get from the books and narratives of the best voyagers.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

That is, you discourage him from looking abroad into the world of reason and civility, the most natural state of mankind; and require him to waste his time and observation on slaves, madmen, or savages; states, in which reason and civility have no place, and where humanity itself, almost, disappears.

Admirable advice this, to come from a philosopher! and still better, to send your disciple to take his information of this unnatural disordered scene from the lying accounts of ignorant, ill-instructed, and gaping tale-tellers!

MR. LOCKE.

I was afraid, I should not be able to secure to myself the good opinion, which your Lordship was pleased to express of my *knowledge of human nature*. This mortifying experience puts an end to my adventurous flights, at once; and forces me back again into the narrower walk, which your Lordship seems willing to prescribe to me.

DIALOGUE VIII.

Be it then, as you insist, that an *English* gentleman's care should be, to accomplish himself in the school of reason and civility; to fit himself, in short, for that state which your Lordship dignifies with the name of *natural*. Still I declare against his *European* travels.

The manners of each state are peculiar to itself, and best adapted to it. The civility, that prevails in some places on the continent, may be more studied and exquisite than ours; but not therefore to be preferred before it. Those refinements have had their birth from correspondent policies; to which they are well suited, and from which they receive their whole value. In the more absolute monarchies of *Europe*, all are courtiers. In our freer monarchy, all should be citizens. Let then the arts of address and insinuation flourish in *France*. Without them, what merit can pretend to success, what talents open the way to favour and distinction? But let a manlier character prevail here. We have a prince to serve, not to flatter: we have a country to embrace, not a court to adore: we have, in a word, objects to pursue, and interests to promote, from the care of which our finer neighbours are happily disburthened.

Let our countrymen then be indulged in the plainness, nay, the roughness of their manners: but let them atone for this defect, by their useful sense, their superior knowledge, their public spirit, and, above all, by their unpolished integrity. DIALOGUE VIII.

Would your Lordship's favourite Athens have done wisely (or rather did it do so?) to exchange the simplicity and manly freedom of its ancient character, for the fopperies and prostrations of the Asiatic courts? Nay, would the softer accomplishments of Athens, in its best state, have done well in a citizen of *Sparta?*

Your Lordship sees what to conclude from these hints. For my own part, my Lord, I esteem politeness, in the reasonable sense of the word, as the ornament, nay more, as the duty of humanity. But, under colour of making this valuable acquisition, let no culture of the human mind, no instruction in letters and business, no discipline of the passions, no improvements of the head and heart, be neglected. Let the foundation of these essential virtues be laid deep in the usual forms of our *public*, if you will, or (as you know I had rather) in the way of a more attentive and

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moral, because *private*, education. Let the commerce of the world, in due time and under due regulation, succeed to this care; and your Lordship will find your young gentleman as fully accomplished in all respects as, in reason, you should wish to see him. And for proof of it, if I were not restrained, by a common and perhaps false delicacy, from bringing the names of our friends and acquaintance into example in conversation, how many instances of this sort could I point to, in such men as your Lordship has known in your own country, and is most disposed to reverence; and some of them, possibly, in your own family!

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

Rather tell me, how we may reasonably expect to see such models produced, according to the vulgar way of our home-breeding: that one or two such may, perhaps, after strict search, be found among ourselves, I shall not dispute with you.

MR. LOCKE.

The search would cost me small pains. But I press the matter no further. It is enough

that your Lordship sees I have my eye on some, the most estimable, nay the most accomplished characters, that have been formed among ourselves: and that even so envied a thing, as a fine gentleman, has been fashioned on this side the water. But the rarity of the production, you think, makes against me, and shews there is no trusting to the stubborn soil and unfriendly climate of our country. You conclude, upon the whole, for the expediency of foreign travel, from the acknowledged defects of our authorized seats of learning; which, according to your Lordship's idea and representation of them, are so degenerate and depraved, that nothing of worth and value can be reasonably expected from that quarter. Dialogue VIII.

This, after all, is your main reason for advising a foreign education. Your spite is to our Universities; and, to bribe, or rather provoke me into the same quarrel, your Lordship did not forget to remind me of the little obligation, which I myself, who was trained in their discipline, have had to them.

I could assent, perhaps, to some part of this charge. It is certain, at least, that the prejudices, the bigotry, the false learning, and narrow principles, which have prevailed too much,

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

This account of the institution and genius of our *English* Universities may be easily credited, even from what we now see of them. But, though some causes may be assigned for the introduction of these barbarous plans of education, what reason can be given why they should be cherished in our days, or that men of sense should submit to them?

MR. LOCKE.

The reason is not far to seek. These barbarous plans of education had, we have seen, in former times, both their reason and their use. Bodies of men retain the character of their first institution very long; and, all things considered, I am inclined to think it not amiss that they do so. Universities and schools of learning, in particular, should not be in haste to exchange established principles and practices, which the best sense of former ages had introduced, for novel and untried pretensions. The reason is plain: their instructions would have small weight, and their discipline no stability, amid such easy and perpetual changes. They

are; indeed, the depositaries of the public wisdom and virtue; and their business is, to inculcate both on the rising generation, upon the footing on which they are received and understood in the several countries where they are erected. Even if their local statutes laid them under no restraint, an easiness in departing from established rules were a levity not to be commended; and would, in the end, be unfavourable to truth itself, when at any time it should come, in its turn, to be entertained among them. DIALOGUE VIII.

The truth is, my Lord, we are ready to consider these seminaries as schools of philosophy, strictly so called: whereas their proper character is that of schools of learning and education. Under this last idea, much of that bigotry and prejudice is to be looked for, and should be excused, which would rightly be objected to them under that other denomination.

Hence then, I conceive, a just apology may be made for the present condition of our Universities. If they have not, in all respects, corrected the vices of their original institution, let the influence and authority of such institution be pleaded in their excuse; and if certain inveterate errors in speculation (for I know

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your Lordship's chief quarrel to them) not immediately connected with their institution, happen still to maintain their credit in those places, let it be considered that the general sense of the public should in all reason be expected to go before their profession and propagation even of right principles. Believe it, my Lord, as reason and sound philosophy make a progress among us, these bodies will gradually, though reluctantly indeed, reform themselves: and the service they will then render to truth will be the greater for the opposition they now make to it.

I have ventured to say, that this reformation will, in due time, come of itself. I think, it certainly *will*; as well in regard to the general plan of their studies, as their particular principles and opinions. Yet, in respect of the *former* at least, it might perhaps be something quickened by external application. I know the attempt is delicate and difficult; but it might possibly succeed, if carried on under cover of some still greater reformation; which seizes the mind with much force, turns it to a new bias, and makes it propitious to every thing that tends to the attainment of its principal object.

Such occasions do not present themselves every day. One such we have seen; but we missed the season. Whatever was fundamentally wrong in the constitution of the Universities, should have been set right in that great æra, when the church was reformed. The undertaking had been of a piece with the rest of that extraordinary work; and the opportunity was inviting. But whether the minds of men were then ripe for this other reformation, or whether there was indeed light enough in the nation at that time fully and properly to effect it, may not unreasonably, I know, be made a question with your Lordship.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

It is no question at all with me, whether any service of that kind was to be expected from those great dealers in church-work. Perhaps another and *later* æra may be pointed out, when the same office might, and should, have been undertaken by our political craftsmen.

MR. LOCKE.

Your Lordship means at the *Revolution*; and, as the generous principles of liberty, on

Discourse VIII. which the Revolution was founded, had received but little countenance from the Universities, this consideration, you will say, afforded the best pretence for attempting their reformation. But wise men saw, that the credit which those learned bodies had drawn to themselves, and indeed deservedly, by their late conduct, notwithstanding their speculative systems and conclusions, was at that time too high, to suffer a rigorous inspection to be made into their statutes and constitutions: they saw, in that convulsion of the state, it would be impossible to carry on a design of this nature, without endangering the new settlement, or exposing it at least to many odious and inconvenient imputations: and they saw, besides, that the spirit of liberty, which had prevailed so far as to reform the state itself, would insensibly extend its influence to all subordinate societies.

In a word, the close and immediate connexion, which the Universities have with the church, made it natural and highly reasonable to expect that both should have shared the same fate at the *Reformation:* but the necessity was not so urgent, or so visible at least, that the Universities should be new-modelled, at the *Revolution.*

However, my Lord, what the wisdom of *either* age omitted, or was unable to do, time, and that desuetude which attends upon it, will gradually bring about; not to say, has in some measure accomplished. And, to take matters as they now are, the studies and discipline of the Universities are not without their use, and should not be too violently declaimed against and degraded.

The elements of literature are reasonably well taught in those places. At least, the familiarity, which men have with the learned languages (the proper foundation, as I dare say your Lordship holds, of all real learning and politeness) is very much owing to the lectures of our colleges. And, though I am sensible what exceptions are to be made in other respects, yet, on the whole, religion, and good morals, receive an advantage from their institutions, and the regularity of their discipline.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

Yes; their religion is intolerance; and their morals, servility. For, as to any freedom of manly thought, or the dignity of virtue—

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MR. LOCKE.

You are ready to look for them any where else than in our *English* Universities.

Come on then, my Lord: have the goodness to point out to us those happier seminaries, where these and all other virtues are more successfully propagated.

But which way will your Lordship direct us to take, in this search? Shall we turn to the North of this country for those advantages, which we despair of finding in the South? Or, because the grossness of our island air may infect all parts alike, shall we shape our course to the Continent? And does your Lordship encourage us to look for some *Athens* amidst the Protestant states of *Germany*, in the *Netherlands*, or the *Swiss* Cantons?

These, I take it, are the only scenes which your Lordship can have in view; for, as high as their reputation may be in this respect, you would hardly advise the breeding of our *English* youth in the colleges of the Jesuits.

One word then, if you please, on these Protestant Universities on the Continent.

Your Lordship and I have had some experience of the state of literature and education in those places. Eminent and excellent men they surely have amongst them. But so, your Lordship will confess, have the Universities of *England*. If we do not readily find those who, at this day, may be opposed to a LIMBORCH or a LE CLERC; yet it is not long since we had to boast of a CHILLINGWORTH, a CUDWORTH, and a WHICHCOT; all, men of manly thought, generous minds, and incomparable learning. DIALOGUE VIII.

But the question is not, you know, of particular men, which such great bodies rarely want; but, of the general frame and constitution of learned societies, fit for the purposes of polite and liberal education.

Shall we say then, that the scattered tribes of students in a *Dutch* or *Swiss* town are likely to be better instructed, or better governed, than the young scholars in our colleges; or, that the good order, discipline, and sobriety of these places, is to be compared with the anarchy and licence of those other?

Your Lordship, I know, takes a pleasure to conceive of certain foreign academies, as of

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that ANCIENT one, where the students visited, without constraint, the schools of philosophers, and even bore a part in their free conferences and disputations: you even love to paint the noble youth to yourself, as of old, spatiating, at their leisure, in shady walks and porticos, and imbibing the principles of science as they drop upon them in the dews of Attic eloquence and politeness.

All this, my Lord, is very well: yet, setting aside a certain colouring of expression which takes and amuses the imagination, I see but little to admire in this picture; certainly not enough to make one regret the want of the original, and seriously to prefer this easy manner of breeding, to that stricter form which prevails in our own Universities: where the day begins and ends with religious offices: where the diligence of the youth is quickened and relieved, in turn, by stated hours of study and recreation: where temperance and sobriety are even *convivial* virtues; and the two extremes of a festive jollity and unsocial gloom are happily tempered by the decencies of a *common table;* where, in a word, the discipline of Spartan HALLS and the civility of Athenian BANQUETS are, or may be, united.

Surely, my Lord, these wholesome regula- DIALOGUE VIII.
tions, with many others that might be mentioned, could we but strip them of the opprobrious name of collegiate and monastic, are of another use and value in education, than the lax unrestrained indulgence of foreign seminaries.

But, were there even no difference in this respect, as there is surely a great deal, are we to reckon for nothing the disparity of civil and religious constitutions?

Your Lordship, I dare say, will not suspect me of a bigoted adherence to any mere *mode* of civil or ecclesiastical regimen. But is it all one, whether a young boy, who is destined to be a subject to the crown, and a member of the church of *England*, be inured to the equality of republican governments, and of calvinistical churches? It may be well for men of confirmed age and ability to look into both; but would you train up your son in a way that is likely to indispose him, right or wrong, to the institutions of his own country?

Besides, are there fewer prejudices, think ye, in the men of other churches and governments, than our own? or, are their professors

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and institutors of youth more free from popular errors and blind attachments, though of a different sort, than the tutors and masters of education in our country?

Nay, consider with yourself, my Lord; is there not as much tyranny in the administration of some they call *free states;* and as much restraint and persecution in the principles of some they call *free churches,* as can fairly be charged on the monarchy or church of *England?*

So that what you could expect to gain by preferring these foreign schools of learning to your own, I cannot easily imagine. All that is worth acquiring in either, you have, at least, an equal chance to meet with at home: and what should be avoided, may, nay must, with more probability, be encountered abroad.

But your Lordship, perhaps, would confine your young traveller to no *one* seat of learning; and have it only in view to convey him hastily, under the wing of a tutor, through many a famous academy, without settling him in any. This, I must confess, is the way to keep clear of prejudices; but, whether any solid instruction, or just science either of men or things, is

to be gathered from so cursory an education, your Lordship will do well to consider. DIALOGUE VIII.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

You have done me the favour to imagine many projects and designs for me, which I was too dull to entertain in my own thoughts. But, if the education of a young man of rank and quality cannot be carried on without the assistance of academical instructors, I would much sooner trust him to the care of such as the more free and liberal genius of certain foreign Universities has formed, than submit him to the tutorage of those priestly guides, to whom our narrow and slavish institutions have consigned the province of education, in our own country.

MR. LOCKE.

Your Lordship now indeed speaks out very plainly. Your objection, then, is to CLERGY-TUTORS; and you think it absurd and even pernicious to commit our noble and liberal youth to the care of churchmen. You would rather see them in lay-hands; in the hands of

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philosophers, properly so called; who, indifferent to every thing but pure truth and reason, are in no danger of imbibing wrong principles themselves, and are therefore under no temptation of instilling any such into the minds of their followers.

The thought is happy, my Lord; and, if a number of these philosophers could any where be found, I might be induced to fall into the project of employing such only in the province of education. But, the condition, in which truth and reason are now left, and seem likely to continue, in this world of ours, affords little room for such flattering expectations. An unprejudiced instructor, I doubt, is a rarity not to be met with, I do not say in our Universities, but even out of them: and, prejudices for prejudices, some persons may be apt to think those of a churchman as tolerable as of any other.

But, my Lord, having no particular bias on my own mind in favour of that order, and having something perhaps to *resent* from several individuals of it, it will not misbecome me to hazard a word or two, in its vindication.

You will permit me then to say, that I see no peculiar unfitness in the clergy for the

office, they are called to, in this country, of superintending the business of education. The leisure they enjoy; the various learning and general studies, which that leisure enables them, and their profession obliges them, to pursue; and, lastly, the strictness of life and manners, or, if you will, the very decorum, which their character imposes upon them; these circumstances seem generally to have marked them out, as the properest persons to form the manners and cultivate the minds of youth, in all countries. In our *own*, that propriety strikes one the more, since their prejudices, of whatever kind, are but in common to them with other speculative and studious men; and since even their interest, rightly understood, and as seen by the best and wisest of themselves, (whatever may have been warmly and passionately said by some persons) is in no degree separate from that of the great community, to which they belong.

Yes, your Lordship will say, their hopes and views of preferment —

Yet, in this respect, they are but on a level with other men of most other professions; nay, with all men out of them, that aspire to rise, by their merits or the favour of their superiors,

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to any distinction in the world. And though we commonly say, that the clergy should be *only* animated by purer motives, yet you cannot expect, nay would not seriously wish, that they should be altogether insensible to such as these.

It is true, in countries where the clergy have a dependance on some foreign power, or where they have usurped an independent power to themselves, or where, lastly, the civil constitution is so ill defined that the privileges of the subject lie at the mercy of the prince; in each of these cases, the ambition of the clergy may be, and in fact has been, productive of many public mischiefs. But our Protestant clergy, who are in no foreign subjection, claim no independency, and fill their place in a system all whose parts are, now at least, exactly regulated by known laws, cannot, by their private ambition, disturb the general interest, and have no peculiar inducements to attempt it. And though particulars may sometimes, by their follies and indiscretions, dishonour themselves, yet the effect cannot be considerable, and certainly affords no good reason for taking the province of education, for which on so many accounts they are well qualified, out of their hands.

Your Lordship's candour and equity will then, upon the whole, permit an obvious distinction to be made between the MEN and their PROFESSION. Too many of the sacred order, I confess, and am sorry for it, seem now to have their minds perverted by those principles, and heated by those passions, which do little credit to their function, or themselves; and are equally inconsistent with the genius of that religion they profess to teach, as they are unfriendly to that legal constitution both of church and state, which they have bound themselves to support. But their *profession* is little concerned in all this; and in a succession or two of these men (if the present set be, many of them, incorrigible) you may surely reckon upon all those prejudices and passions being worked off, which now administer the occasion of so much dislike to it.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

Well, but *clergy-manners;* will they, too, be worked off, with their other infirmities?

MR. LOCKE.

Perhaps, they may; if not, forgive them this one defect; at least, if it be their only

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one. But you do not mean, that the manners of the clergy, *as such*, are more offensive than those of other people. They are suited to their profession and way of life, from which they naturally result; and if the clergy have not that gloss upon them, which sets off the manners of finer men, they rarely disgust you with the affectation of it. But, after all, if persons of your Lordship's quality and breeding would condescend to countenance them a little, they would, doubtless, brighten under your eye; and might come in time to reflect somewhat of that high polish, which glistens so much in the address and conversation of their betters.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

What transmutations they may undergo hereafter, and by what means, I am not curious to enquire. On this head, their candid apologist is at liberty to be as much in jest, or in earnest, as he thinks fit. But from what appears at present, I must take leave, in my turn, to think less reverendly, than He would have me, of our sacred instructors; and though I value some particular persons of the order, as much as any man, yet, till I see a greater change in the principles, temper, and manners

of that body, than, I fear, is likely to come to pass in our days, I can have no very favourable sentiments of those rude, illiberal, and monkish seminaries, where such worthies preside. DIALOGUE VIII.

MR. LOCKE.

Let us have patience, my Lord. I have not scrupled to confess to you, that much is, at present, amiss in those seminaries, and wants to be set right. But so, God knows, there is every where else. As our factions and parties both in religion and government die away, the Universities will become more reasonable; and as the general manners refine, they too will, of course, take a better air and polish. In a word, they may not lead the public taste or judgment; but, as I said, they will be sure to follow it.

And the happy period is not, perhaps, far off. For, now I have taken upon me to divine so much of the future condition of our Universities, let me paint to you more particularly what I conceive of their growing improvements; and, in a kind of prophetic strain, such as old age, they say, pretends to, and may be indulged in, delineate to you a faint

DIALOGUE VIII. prospect of those brighter days, which I see rising upon us.

"The TIME will come, my Lord, and I even "assure myself it is at no great distance, when "the Universities of *England* shall be as re- "spectable, for the learning they teach, the "principles they instil, and the morals they "inculcate, as they are now contemptible, in "your Lordship's eye at least, on these several "accounts.

"I see the day, when a scholastic theology "shall give place to a rational divinity, con- "ducted on the principles of sound criticism "and well interpreted scripture: when their "sums and systems shall fly before enlightened "reason and sober speculation: when a fanci- "ful, precarious, and hypothetic philosophy, "shall desert their schools; and be replaced "by real science, supporting itself on the sure "grounds of experiment and cautious observa- "tion: when their physics shall be fact; their "metaphysics, common sense; and their ethics, "human nature.

"Do I flatter myself with fond imaginations, "my Lord? Or is not the time at hand, when "St. PAUL shall lecture our divines, and not

"CALVIN; our BACONS and BOYLES expel "ARISTOTLE; Mr. NEWTON fill the chair of "DES CARTES; and even your friend (if your "Lordship can forgive the arrogance of placing "himself by the side of such men) take the "lead of BURGERSDICIUS?

"Still, my Lord, my prophetic eye pene-"trates further. Amidst these improvements "in real science, the languages shall be learnt "for use, and not pedantry: Your Lordship's "admired ancients shall be respected, and not "idolized: the forms of classic composition be "emulated: and a set of men arise, even be-"neath the shade of our academic cloysters, "that shall polish the taste, as well as advance "the knowledge, of their country.

"Yet, I am but half way in the portraiture "of my vision. The appointed lecturers of "our youth, whom your Lordship loves to "qualify with the name of *bearded boys*, shall "adopt the manners of men; shall instruct "with knowledge, and persuade with reason; "shall be the first to explode slavish doctrines "and narrow principles; shall draw respect to "themselves, rather from the authority of their "characters, than of their places; and, which "is the first and last part of a good education,

DIALOGUE VIII.

"set the noble and ingenuous youth intrusted
"to their care, the brightest examples of dili-
"gence, sobriety, and virtue.

"Perhaps in those days, a freer commerce
"shall be opened with the world: the students
"of our colleges be ambitious of appearing in
"good company: and a general civility pre-
"vail, where your Lordship sees nothing, at
"present, but barbarism and rudeness.

"Nay, who knows but, in this different
"state of things, the arts themselves may gain
"admission into these seminaries; and even
"the exercises be taught there, which our
"noble youth are now sent to acquire on the
"Continent?

"Such, I persuade myself, if the presage of
"old experience may pass for any thing, is
"the happier scene which a little time shall
"disclose to your view, in our *English* Uni-
"versities. What its duration may be, I can-
"not discover. Much will depend on the ge-
"neral manners, and the public encourage-
"ment. In the mean time, if any cloud rest
"upon it, it will not, I assure myself, arise
"immediately from within, but from the little,
"or, which is worse, the ill-directed favour,

"which the Great shall vouchsafe to shew to "places, so qualified, and so deserving their "protection. DIALOGUE VIII.

"Yet, after all I have seen, or perhaps "dreamt, as your Lordship may rather object "to me, of the future flourishing estate of our "Universities, and of their extreme fitness in "all respects to answer the ends of their insti- "tution, I cannot be mistaken in one predic- "tion, "that the mode of early Travel will still "continue; perhaps its fury will increase; and "our youth of quality be still sent abroad for "their education, when every reason shall "cease which your Lordship has now alleged "in favour of that practice."

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

This last prediction may, perhaps, be true; I mean, if those others should ever be accomplished. But as I have no great faith in modern prophecy, and see at present no symptoms of this coming age of gold, which your fancy has now presented to us, you must excuse me if these *prophetic strains*, as you termed them, have no great weight with me before their completion. Should that ever hap-

DIALOGUE VIII. pen, I shall respect your foresight, at least; and rejoice extremely at an event, which, I shall then freely own, will leave my countrymen no excuse for their folly.

This, Sir, was the substance of what passed between us on the subject in question. Our other friends interposed, indeed, at times; but rarely, and in few words; and I have rather chosen to mix their occasional observations with our own, than perplex and lengthen this recital by a more punctilious exactness. Besides, I could not think it civil to introduce my friends upon the scene, only to shew them, as it were, for mutes; their politeness to us, who were principals in the debate, being such, as to restrain them from bearing any considerable part in it. Yet this way of relation would, no doubt, have given something more of life to the sketch I here send you; as their presence, you may believe, certainly did to the original conversation.

It is enough to say, that nothing more material, than what I have now related to you, passed on the occasion. For by this time the day was pretty well spent, and it was necessary for us to withdraw to our several engagements.

For myself, I leave you to guess the effect which our philosopher's grave remonstrance left upon me. One thing you will think remarkable; that the part of arraigning the present state of things should fall to my share; while he, at an age that is naturally querulous and dissatisfied, was employed in defending it. Whether this be a proof of his wisdom, or good spirits, I pretend not to say. But it gave me a pleasure to hear the old man indulging himself in the prospect of better days, of which, as young as we are, and as warmly as we wish for them, you and I had always despaired. DIALOGUE VIII.

LETTERS

ON

CHIVALRY AND ROMANCE.

LETTERS

ON

CHIVALRY AND ROMANCE:

SERVING TO ILLUSTRATE SOME

PASSAGES IN THE THIRD DIALOGUE.

Guarda, che mal fato
O giovenil vaghezza non ti meni
Al magazino de le ciancie, ab fuggi,
Fuggi quell incantato alloggiamento.
Quivi habitan le maghe, che incantande
Fan traveder, e traudir ciascuno.

TASSO.

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LETTERS

ON

CHIVALRY AND ROMANCE.

LETTER I.

THE ages, we call barbarous, present us with many a subject of curious speculation. What, for instance, is more remarkable than the *Gothic* CHIVALRY? or than the spirit of ROMANCE, which took its rise from that singular institution?

Nothing in human nature, my dear friend, is without its reasons. The modes and fashions of different times may appear, at first sight, fantastic and unaccountable. But they, who look nearly into them, discover some latent cause of their production.

"Nature once known, no prodigies remain,"

LETTER I.

as sings our philosophical bard; but to come at this knowledge, is the difficulty. Sometimes a close attention to the workings of the human mind is sufficient to lead us to it: sometimes more than that, the diligent observation of what passes without us, is necessary.

This last I take to be the case here. The prodigies we are now contemplating, had their origin in the barbarous ages. Why then, says the fastidious modern, look any further for the reason? Why not resolve them at once into the usual caprice and absurdity of barbarians?

This, you see, is a short and commodious philosophy. Yet barbarians have their *own*, such as it is, if they are not enlightened by our reason. Shall we then condemn them unheard, or will it not be fair to let them have the telling of their own story?

Would we know from what causes the institution of *Chivalry* was derived? The time of its birth, the situation of the barbarians amongst whom it arose, must be considered: their wants, designs, and policies, must be explored: we must inquire when, and where, and how, it came to pass that the Western

world became familiarized to this *prodigy*, which we now start at. LETTER I.

Another thing is full as remarkable, and concerns us more nearly. The spirit of Chivalry was a fire which soon spent itself: but that of *Romance*, which was kindled at it, burnt long, and continued its light and heat even to the politer ages.

The greatest geniuses of our own and foreign countries, such as ARIOSTO and TASSO in *Italy*, and SPENSER and MILTON in *England*, were seduced by these barbarities of their forefathers; were even charmed by the *Gothic* Romances. Was this caprice and absurdity in them? Or, may there not be something in the *Gothic* Romance peculiarly suited to the views of a genius, and to the ends of poetry? And may not the philosophic moderns have gone too far in their perpetual ridicule and contempt of it?

To form a judgment in the case, the rise, progress, and genius of *Gothic* Chivalry must be explained.

The circumstances in the *Gothic* fictions and manners, which are proper to the ends of

LETTER I. poetry (if any such there be) must be pointed out.

Reasons, for the decline and rejection of the *Gothic* taste in later times, must be given.

You have in these particulars both the Subject and the PLAN of the following Letters.

LETTER II.

LETTER II.

I LOOK upon Chivalry, as on some mighty river, which the fablings of the poets have made immortal. It may have sprung up amidst rude rocks, and blind deserts. But the noise and rapidity of its course, the extent of country it adorns, and the towns and palaces it ennobles, may lead a traveller out of his way, and invite him to take a view of those dark caverns,

unde supernè
Plurimus Eridani per sylvam volvitur amnis.

I enter, without more words, on the subject I began to open to you in my last letter.

The old inhabitants of these North-West parts of *Europe* were extremely given to the love and exercise of arms. The feats of CHARLEMAGNE and our ARTHUR, in particular, were so famous as in later times, when books of Chivalry were composed, to afford a principal subject to the writers of them[a].

[a] See a discourse at the end of *Love's Labour Lost* in WARB. Ed. of SHAKESPEAR; in which the *origin, subject,*

LETTER II.

But CHIVALRY, properly so called, and under the idea of "a distinct military order, "conferred in the way of investiture, and ac- "companied with the solemnity of an oath "and other ceremonies, as described in the "old historians and romancers," was of later date, and seems to have sprung immediately out of the FEUDAL CONSTITUTION.

The first and most sensible effect of this constitution, which brought about so mighty a change in the policies of *Europe*, was the erection of a prodigious number of petty tyrannies. For, though the great barons were closely tied to the service of their Prince by the conditions of their tenure, yet the power which was given them by it over their own numerous vassals was so great, that, in effect, they all set up for themselves; affected an independency; and were, in truth, a sort of absolute Sovereigns, at least with regard to one another. Hence, their mutual aims and interests often interfering, the feudal state was, in a good degree, a state of war: the feudal chiefs were in frequent enmity with each other: the

and *character* of these books of Chivalry (or *Romances*, properly so called) are explained with an exactness of learning, and penetration, peculiar to that writer—

In tenui labor, at tenuis non gloria—

several combinations of feudal tenants were so many separate armies under their head or chief: and their castles were so many fortresses, as well as palaces, of these puny princes. LETTER II.

In this state of things one sees, that all imaginable encouragement was to be given to the use of arms, under every different form of attack and defence, according as the safety of these different communities, or the ambition of their leaders, might require. And this condition of the times, I suppose, gave rise to that military institution, which we know by the name of CHIVALRY.

Further, there being little or no security to be had amidst so many restless spirits and the clashing views of a neighbouring numerous and independent nobility, the military discipline of their followers, even in the intervals of peace, was not to be relaxed, and their ardour suffered to grow cool, by a total disuse of martial exercises. And hence the proper origin of JUSTS and TURNAMENTS; those images of war, which were kept up in the castles of the barons, and, by an useful policy, converted into the amusement of the knights, when their arms were employed on no serious occasion.

LETTER II.

I call this the *proper origin* of Justs and Turnaments; for the date of them is carried no higher, as far as I can find, even in *France* (where unquestionably they made their first appearance) than the year 1066; which was not till after the introduction of the feudal government into that country. Soon after, indeed, we find them in *England* and in *Germany*; but not till the feudal policy had spread itself in those parts, and had prepared the way for them.

You see, then, my notion is, that Chivalry was no absurd and freakish institution, but the natural and even sober effect of the feudal policy; whose turbulent genius breathed nothing but war, and was fierce and military even in its amusements.

I leave you to revolve this idea in your own mind. You will find, I believe, a reasonable foundation for it in the history of the feudal times, and in the spirit of the feudal government.

LETTER III.

IF the conjecture, I advanced, of the rise of Chivalry, from the circumstances of the feudal government, be thought reasonable, it will not be difficult to account for the several CHARACTERISTICS of this singular profession.

I. "The passion for arms; the spirit of enterprize; the honour of knighthood; the "rewards of valour; the splendour of equipages;" in short, every thing that raises our ideas of the prowess, gallantry, and magnificence of these sons of MARS, is naturally and easily explained on this supposition.

Ambition, interest, glory, all concurred, under such circumstances, to produce these effects. The feudal principles could terminate in nothing else. And when, by the necessary operation of that policy, this turn was given to the thoughts and passions of men, use and fashion would do the rest; and carry them to all the excesses of military fanaticism, which are painted so strongly, but scarcely exaggerated, in the old Romances.

LETTER III.

II. "Their romantic ideas of justice; their "passion for adventures; their eagerness to "run to the succour of the distressed; and the "pride they took in redressing wrongs, and "removing grievances;" all these distinguishing characters of genuine Chivalry are explained on the same principle. For, the feudal state being a state of war, or rather of almost perpetual violence, rapine, and plunder, it was unavoidable that, in their constant skirmishes, stratagems, and surprizes, numbers of the tenants or followers of one Baron should be seized upon and carried away by the followers of another: and the interest, each had to protect his own, would of course introduce the point of honour, in attempting by all means to retaliate on the enemy, and especially to rescue the captive sufferers out of the hands of their oppressors.

It would be meritorious, in the highest degree, to fly to their assistance, when they knew where they were to be come at; or to seek them out with diligence, when they did not. This last *feudal* service soon introduced, what may be truly called *romantic*, the *going in quest of adventures*; which at first, no doubt, was confined to those of their own party, but afterwards, by the habit of acting

on this principle, would be extended much further. So that in process of time, we find the Knights errant, as they were now properly styled, wandering the world over in search of occasions on which to exercise their generous and disinterested valour, indifferently to friends and enemies in distress; LETTER III.

Ecco quei, che le charte empion di sogni,
LANCILOTTO, TRISTANO, e gli altri erranti.

III. "The courtesy, affability, and gallantry, for which these adventurers were so famous, are but the natural effects and consequences of their situation."

For the castles of the Barons were, as I said, the courts of these little sovereigns, as well as their fortresses; and the resort of their vassals thither in honour of their chiefs, and for their own proper security, would make that civility and politeness, which is seen in courts and insensibly prevails there, a predominant part in the character of these assemblies.

This is the poet's own account of

——— court and royal citadel,
The great school-maistresse of all Courtesy.

B. III. C. vi. s. 1.

LETTER III.

And again, more largely in B. VI. C. I. S. I.

Of Court it seems men Courtesie do call,
For that it there most useth to abound;
And well beseemeth that in Princes hall
That Virtue should be plentifully found,
Which of all goodly manners is the ground
And root of civil conversation:
Right so in *faery court* it did resound,
Where courteous knights and ladies most did won
Of all on earth, and made a matchless paragon.

For *Faery Court* means the *reign of Chivalry*; which, it seems, had undergone a fatal revolution before the age of MILTON, who tells us that *Courtesy*

——— is sooner found in lonely sheds
With smoaky rafters, than in tap'stry halls
And courts of princes, where it first was nam'd,
And yet is most pretended. MASK.

Further, the free commerce of the ladies, in those knots and circles of the great, would operate so far on the sturdiest knights, as to give birth to the attentions of gallantry. But this gallantry would take a refined turn, not only from the necessity there was of maintaining the strict form of decorum, amidst a

promiscuous conversation under the eye of the Prince and in his own family; but also from the inflamed sense they must needs have of the frequent outrages committed, by their neighbouring clans of adversaries, on the honour of the sex, when by chance of war they had fallen into their hands. Violations of chastity being the most atrocious crimes they had to charge on their enemies, they would pride themselves in the merit of being its protectors: and as this virtue was, of all others, the fairest and strongest claim of the sex itself to such protection, it is no wonder that the notions of it were, in time, carried to so platonic an elevation. LETTER III.

Thus, again, the great master of Chivalry himself, on this subject,

It hath been thro' all ages ever seen,
That, with the praise of arms and chivalry,
The prize of beauty still hath joined been;
And that for reason's special privity:
For either doth on other much rely;
For HE mee seems most fit the fair to serve,
That can her best defend from villainy;
And SHE most fit his service doth deserve,
That fairest is, and from her faith will never swerve. SPENSER, B. IV. C. V.

LETTER III.

Not but the foundation of this refined gallantry was laid in the ancient manners of the *German* nations. CÆSAR tells us how far they carried their practice of chastity, which he seems willing to account for on political principles. However that be, their consideration of the sex was prodigious, as we see in the history of their irruptions into the Empire; where among all their ravages and devastations of other sorts, we find they generally abstained from offering any violence to the honour of the women.

IV. It only remains to account for that "character of Religion," which was so deeply imprinted on the minds of all knights, and was essential to their institution. We are even told, that *the love of God and of the ladies* went hand in hand, in the duties and ritual of Chivalry.

Two reasons may be assigned for this singularity:

First, the superstition of the times, in which Chivalry arose; which was so great, that no institution of a public nature could have found credit in the world, that was not consecrated by the churchmen, and closely interwoven with religion.

Secondly, the condition of the Christian states; which had been harassed by long wars, and had but just recovered a breathing-time from the brutal ravages of the *Saracen* armies. The remembrance of what they had lately suffered from these grand enemies of the faith, made it natural, and even necessary, to engage a new military order on the side of religion. LETTER III.

And how warmly this principle, *a zeal for the faith*, was acted upon by the professors of Chivalry, and how deeply it entered into their ideas of the military character, we see from the term so constantly used by the old Romancers, of RECREANT [*i. e.* Apostate] Knight; by which they meant to express, with the utmost force, their disdain of a dastard or vanquished knight. For, many of this order falling into the hands of the *Saracens*, such of them as had not imbibed the full spirit of their profession, were induced to renounce their faith, in order to regain their liberty. These men, as sinning against the great fundamental laws of Chivalry, they branded with this name; a name of complicated reproach, which implied a want of the two most essential qualities of a Knight, COURAGE and FAITH.

LETTER III.

Hence too, the reason appears why the *Spaniards*, of all the Europeans, were furthest gone in every characteristic madness of true chivalry. To all the other considerations, here mentioned, their fanaticism in every way was especially instigated and kept alive by the memory and neighbourhood of their old infidel invaders.

And thus we seem to have a fair account of that PROWESS, GENEROSITY, GALLANTRY, and RELIGION, which were the peculiar and vaunted characteristics of the purer ages of Chivalry.

Such was the state of things in the Western world, when the Crusades to the Holy Land were set on foot. Whence we see how well prepared the minds of men were for engaging in that enterprize. Every object, that had entered into the views of the institutors of Chivalry, and had been followed by its professors, was now at hand, to inflame the military and religious ardor of the knights, to the utmost. And here, in fact, we find the strongest and boldest features of their genuine character: *daring* to madness, in enterprises of hazard: burning with zeal for the delivery of the *oppressed*; and, which was deemed the height

of *religious* merit, for the rescue of the holy city out of the hands of infidels; and, lastly, exalting their honour of *chastity* so high as to profess celibacy; as they constantly did, in the several orders of knighthood created on that extravagant occasion. LETTER III.

LETTER IV.

LETTER IV. WHAT think you, my good friend, of this learned deduction? Do not you begin to favour my conjecture, as whimsical as it might seem, of the *rise and genius* of Knight-errantry?

And yet (so slippery is the ground, on which we system-makers stand) from what I observed of the spirit, with which the Crusades were carried on, a hint may be taken, which threatens to overturn my whole system.

It is, "That, whereas I derive the Crusades "from the spirit of Chivalry, the circumstan-"ces attending the progress of the Crusades, "and even as pointed out by myself, seem to "favour the opposite opinion of Chivalry's "taking its rise from that enterprize."

For thus the argument is drawn out by a learned person[a], to whom I communicated the substance of my last Letter.

[a] The late right honourable CHARLES YORKE; who to all the learning of his own profession had joined an exact

"On the crumbling of the Western empire into small states, with regular subordinations of vassals and their chiefs, who looked up to a common sovereign, it was soon found that those chiefs had it in their power to make themselves very formidable to their masters; and, just in that crisis of European manners and empire, the *Saracens* having expelled Christianity from the East, the Western Princes seized the opportunity, and with great craft turned the warlike genius of their feudataries, which would otherwise have preyed upon themselves, into the spirit of Crusades against the common enemy.

But when, now, the ardour of the Crusades was abated in some sort, though not extinguished, the *Gothic* princes and their families had settled into established monarchies. Then it was, that the restless spirit of their vassals, having little employment abroad, and being restrained in a good degree from exerting itself with success in domestic quarrels, broke out in all the extravagances of KNIGHT-ERRANTRY.

taste, and very extensive knowledge, of polite literature. What follows is an extract from a long letter which this excellent person did me the honour to write to me on the subject of these letters, when he had read them in the first edition.

LETTER IV.

Military fame, acquired in the Holy land, had entitled the adventurers to the *insignia* of arms, the source of Heraldry; and inspired them with the love of war and the passion of enterprize. Their late expeditions had given them a turn for roving in quest of adventures; and their religious zeal had infused high notions of piety, justice, and chastity.

The scene of action being now more confined, they turned themselves, from *the world's debate*, to private and personal animosities. Chivalry was employed in rescuing humble and faithful vassals, from the oppression of petty lords; their women, from savage lust; and the hoary heads of hermits (a species of Eastern monks, much reverenced in the Holy land), from rapine and outrage.

In the mean time the courts of the feudal sovereigns grew magnificent and polite; and, as the military constitution still subsisted, military merit was to be upheld; but, wanting its old objects, it naturally softened into the fictitious images and courtly exercises of war, in *justs and tournaments:* where the honour of the ladies supplied the place of zeal for the holy Sepulchre; and thus the courtesy of elegant love, but of a wild and fanatic species, as being

engrafted on spiritual enthusiasm, came to mix itself with the other characters of the Knights-errant." LETTER IV.

In this way, you see, all the characteristics of Chivalry, which I had derived from the essential properties of the feudal government, are made to result from the spirit of Crusades, which with me was only an accidental effect of it: and this deduction may be thought to agree best with the representation of the old Romancers.

This hypothesis, so plausible in itself, is very ingeniously supported. Yet I have something to object to it; or rather, which flatters me more, I think I can turn it to the advantage of my own system.

For what if I allow (as indeed I needs must) that *Chivalry*, such as we have it represented in books of Romance, so much posterior to the date of that military institution, took its colour and character from the impressions made on the minds of men by the spirit of crusading into the Holy land? Still it may be true, that Chivalry itself had, properly, another and an earlier origin. And I must think it certainly *had*, if for no other, yet, for this reason: that,

LETTER IV.

unless the seeds of that spirit, which appeared in the Crusades, had been plentifully sown and indeed grown up into some maturity in the feudal times preceding that event, I see not how it could have been possible for the Western princes to give that politic diversion to their turbulent vassals, which the new hypothesis supposes.

In short, there are TWO DISTINCT PERIODS to be carefully observed, in a deduction of the rise and progress of Chivalry.

The FIRST is that in which the empire was overturned, and the feudal governments were every where introduced on its ruins, by the Northern nations. In this æra, that new policy settled itself in the West, and operated so powerfully as to lay the first foundations, and to furnish the remote causes, of what we know by the name of Chivalry.

The OTHER period is, when these causes had taken a fuller effect, and shewed themselves in that signal enterprize of the Crusades; which not only concurred with the spirit of Chivalry, already pullulating in the minds of men, but brought a prodigious encrease, and gave a singular force and vigour, to all its operations. In

this æra, Chivalry took deep root, and at the same time shot up to its full height and size. So that now it was in the state of VIRGIL's Tree— LETTER IV.

—Quæ quantum vertice ad auras
Æthereas, tantum radice in Tartara tendit.
Ergo non hiemes illam, non flabra, neque imbres
Convellunt: immota manet, multosque per annos
Multa virûm volvens durando sæcula vincit.

From this last period, the Romancers, whether in prose or verse, derive all their ideas of Chivalry. It was *natural* for them to do so; for they were best acquainted with that period: and, besides, it suited their *design* best; for the manners, they were to paint, were then full formed, and so distinctly marked as fitted them for the use of description.

But that the former period, notwithstanding, really gave birth to this institution may be gathered, not only from the reason of the thing, but from the surer information of authentic history. For there are traces of Chivalry, in its most peculiar and characteristic forms, to be found in the age preceding the Crusades; and even justs and tournaments,

LETTER IV.

the *image* of serious Knight-errantry, were certainly of earlier date than that event, as I had before occasion to observe to you.

Though I think, then, my notion *of the rise of Chivalry* stands unimpaired, or rather is somewhat illustrated and confirmed, by what the excellent person has opposed to it, yet I could not hold it fair to conceal so specious and well supported an objection from you. You are too generous to take advantage of the arms I put into your hands; and are, besides, so far from any thoughts of combating my system itself, that your concern, it seems, is only to know, where I learned the several particulars, on which I have formed it.

You are willing, you say, to advance on sure grounds; and therefore call upon me to point out to you the authorities, from which I pretend to have collected the several marks and characteristics of true Chivalry.

Your request is reasonable; and I acknowledge the omission, in not acquainting you that my information was taken from its proper source, the *old Romances*. Not that I shall make a merit with you in having perused these barbarous volumes myself; much less would I

impose the ungrateful task upon you. Thanks to the curiosity of certain painful collectors, this knowledge may be obtained at a cheaper rate. And I think it sufficient to refer you to a learned and very elaborate memoir of a *French* writer, who has put together all that is requisite to be known on this subject. Materials are first laid in, before the architect goes to work; and if the structure, I am here raising out of them, be to your mind, you will not think the worse of it because I pretend not, myself, to have worked in the quarry. In a word, and to drop this magnificent allusion, if I account to you for the rise and genius of Chivalry, it is all you are to expect; for an idea of what Chivalry was in itself, you may have recourse to tom. xx. of the *Memoirs of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres.* LETTER IV.

And with this explanation I return, at length, to my proper business.

Supposing my idea of Chivalry to be fairly given, the conjecture I advance on the *origin and nature* of it, you incline to think, may deserve to be admitted. But you will, perhaps, admit it the more readily, if you reflect, "That there is a remarkable correspondency

LETTER IV.

"between the manners of the old heroic times, "as painted by their great romancer, HOMER, "and those which are represented to us in "books of modern knight-errantry." A fact, of which no good account, I believe, can be given but by the assistance of another, not less certain, "That the political state of *Greece*, in "the earlier periods of its story, was similar in "many respects to that of *Europe*, as broken "by the feudal system into an infinite number "of petty independent governments."

It is not my design to encroach on the province of the learned person[b], to whom I owe this hint, and who hath undertaken, at his leisure, to enlarge upon it. But some few circumstances of agreement between the *Heroic* and *Gothic* manners, such as are most obvious and occur to my memory, while I am writing, may be worth putting down, by way of specimen only of what may be expected from a professed inquiry into this curious subject.

And, FIRST, "the military enthusiasm of "the Barons is but of a piece with the fanati-"cism of the Heroes." Hence the same particularity of description, in the account of bat-

[b] See the *Memoir*, just quoted.

tles, wounds, deaths, in the *Greek* poet, as in the *Gothic* romancers: hence that perpetual succession of combats and deeds of arms, even to satiety, in the *Iliad*: and hence that minute curiosity, in the display of the dresses, arms, accoutrements of the combatants, which we find so strange, in that poem. The minds of all men being occupied and in a manner possessed with warlike images and ideas, were much gratified by the poet's dwelling on the very slightest circumstances of these things, which now, for want of their prejudices, appear cold and unaffecting to modern readers. LETTER IV.

But the correspondency holds in more particular considerations. For,

2. "We hear much of Knights-errant encountering *Giants*, and quelling *Savages*, in books of Chivalry."

These Giants were oppressive feudal Lords; and every Lord was to be met with, like the Giant, in his strong hold, or castle. Their dependants of a lower form, who imitated the violence of their superiors, and had not their castles, but their lurking-places, were the Savages of Romance. The greater Lord was

LETTER IV.

called a Giant, for his power; the less a Savage, for his brutality.

All this is shadowed out in the *Gothic* tales, and sometimes expressed in plain words. The objects of the Knight's vengeance go indeed by the various names of Giants, Paynims, Saracens, and Savages. But of what family they all are, is clearly seen from the poet's description:

What Mister wight, quoth he, and how far hence
Is he, that doth to travellers such harms?
He is, said he, a man of great defence,
Expert in battle, and in deeds of arms;
And more embolden'd by the wicked charms
With which his daughter doth him still support;
Having *great Lordships got and goodly farms*
Thro' strong oppression of his power extort;
By which he still them holds and keeps with strong effort.

And daily he his wrong encreaseth more:
For never wight he lets to pass that way
Over his bridge, albee he rich or poor,
But he him makes his passage penny pay.
Else he doth hold him back or beat away.

Thereto he hath a *Groom of evil guise,* LETTER IV.
Whose scalp is bare, that bondage doth bewray,
Which polls and pills the poor in piteous wise,
But he himself upon the rich doth tyrannize.
SPENSER, B. V. C. ii.

Here we have the great oppressive Baron very graphically set forth: and the *Groom of evil guise* is as plainly the Baron's vassal. The Romancers, we see, took no great liberty with these respectable personages, when they called the one a Giant, and the other a Savage.

"Another terror of the *Gothic* ages was, "*Monsters, Dragons,* and *Serpents.*" These stories were received in those days for several reasons: 1. From the vulgar belief of enchantments: 2. From their being reported, on the faith of Eastern tradition, by the adventurers into the Holy Land: 3. In still later times, from the strange things told and believed, on the discovery of the new world.

This last consideration we find employed by SPENSER to give an air of probability to his *Fairy Tales,* in the preface to his second book.

LETTER IV.

Now in all these respects *Greek* antiquity very much resembles the *Gothic*. For what are HOMER's *Læstrigons* and *Cyclops*, but bands of lawless savages, with, each of them, a Giant of enormous size at their head? And what are the *Grecian* BACCHUS and HERCULES, but Knights-errant, the exact counter-parts of Sir LAUNCELOT and AMADIS DE GAULE?

For this interpretation we have the authority of our great poet:

Such first was BACCHUS, that with furious might
All th' East, before untam'd, did overcome,
And wrong repressed and establish'd right,
Which lawless men had formerly fordonne.
Next HERCULES his like ensample shew'd,
Who all the West with equal conquest wonne,
And monstrous tyrants with his club subdu'd,
The club of justice drad, with kingly pow'r endu'd. B. V. C. i.

Even PLUTARCH's life of THESEUS reads, throughout, like a modern Romance: and Sir ARTHEGAL himself is hardly his fellow, for righting wrongs and redressing grievances. So that EURIPIDES might well make him say of himself, *that he had chosen the profession and*

calling of a Knight-errant: for this is the sense, and almost the literal construction, of the following verses: Letter IV.

Ἔθος τόδ' εἰς Ἕλληνας ἐξελεξάμην
Ἀεὶ ΚΟΛΑΣΤΗΣ ΤΩΝ ΚΑΚΩΝ καθεςάναι.
Ἱκέτιδες, ver. 340.

Accordingly, THESEUS is a favourite Hero (witness the *Knight's Tale* in CHAUCER) even with the Romance-writers.

Nay, could the very castle of a *Gothic* giant be better described than in the words of HOMER,

High walls and battlements the courts inclose,
And the strong gates defy a host of foes.
Od. B. XVII. ver. 318.

And do not you remember that the *Grecian* Worthies were, in their day, as famous for encountering Dragons and quelling Monsters of all sorts, as for suppressing Giants?

——per hos cecidere justâ
Morte Centauri, cecidit tremendæ
Flamma Chimæræ.

3. "The oppressions, which it was the glory of the Knight to avenge, were frequently car-

LETTER IV.

ried on, as we are told, *by the charms and enchantments of women.*"

THESE *charms*, we may suppose, are often metaphorical; as expressing only the blandishments of the sex, by which they either seconded the designs of their Lords, or were enabled to carry on designs for themselves. Sometimes they are taken to be real; the ignorance of those ages acquiescing in such conceits.

And are not these stories matched by those of *Calypso* and *Circe*, the enchantresses of the *Greek* poet?

Still there are conformities more directly to our purpose.

4. "Robbery and piracy were honourable in both; so far were they from reflecting any discredit on the ancient or modern *redressers of wrongs.*"

What account can be given of this odd circumstance, but that, in the feudal times and in the early days of *Greece*, when government was weak, and unable to redress the frequent injuries of petty sovereigns, it would be glori-

ous for private adventurers to undertake this work; and, if they could accomplish it in no other way, to pay them in kind by downright plunder and rapine?

This, in effect, is the account given us, of the same disposition of the old *Germans*, by CÆSAR: "Latrocinia," says he, "nullam habent infamiam, quæ extra fines cujusque civitatis fiunt." And the reason appears from what he had just told us—"in pace, nullus est communis magistratus; sed principes regionum atque pagorum inter suos jus dicunt, controversiasque minuunt." *De Bello Gall.* l. vi. § 21.

5. Their manners, in another respect, were the same. "Bastardy was in credit with both." They were extremely watchful over the chastity of their own women; but such as they could seize upon in the enemy's quarter were lawful prize. Or, if at any time they transgressed in this sort at home, the heroic ages were complaisant enough to cover the fault by an ingenious fiction. The offspring was reputed divine.

Nay, so far did they carry their indulgence to this commerce, that their greatest Heroes were

LETTER IV. the fruit of Goddesses approached by mortals; just as we hear of the doughtiest Knights being born of Fairies.

6. Is it not strange, that, together with the greatest fierceness and savageness of character, "the utmost generosity, hospitality, and courtesy, should be imputed to the heroic ages?" ACHILLES was at once the most relentless, vindictive, implacable, and the friendliest of men.

We have the very same representation in the *Gothic* Romances, where it is almost true what BUTLER says humorously of these benign heroes, that

> They did in fight but cut work out
> T' employ their courtesies about.

How are these contradictions, in the characters of the ancient and modern men of arms, to be reconciled, but by observing that, as in those lawless times dangers and distresses of all sorts abounded, there would be the same demand for compassion, gentleness, and generous attachments to the unfortunate, those especially of their own clan, as of resentment, rage, and animosity against their enemies?

7. Again: consider the martial *Games*, which ancient *Greece* delighted to celebrate on

great and solemn occasions: and see if they had not the same origin, and the same purpose, as the *Tournaments* of the *Gothic* warriors. LETTER IV.

8. Lastly, "the passion for adventures, so natural in their situation, would be as naturally attended with the love of praise and glory."

Hence the same encouragement, in the old *Greek* and *Gothic* times, to panegyrists and poets; the BARDS being as welcome to the tables of the feudal Lords, as the ΑΟΙΔΟΙ of old, to those of the *Grecian* Heroes.

And, as the same causes ever produce the same effects, we find that, even so late as ELIZABETH's reign, the savage *Irish* (who were much in the state of the ancient *Greeks*, living under the anarchy, rather than government, of their numberless puny chiefs) had their Rhymers in principal estimation. It was for the reason just given, for the honour of their panegyrics on their fierce adventures and successes. And thus it was in *Greece*:

For chief to Poets such respect belongs,
By rival nations courted for their Songs;
These, states invite, and mighty kings admire,
Wide as the Sun displays his vital fire.

Od. B. XVII.

LETTER V.

LETTER V.

THE purpose of the casual hints, suggested in my last letter, was only to shew that the resemblance between the Heroic and *Gothic* ages is great: so great that the observation of it did not escape the old Romancers themselves, *with whom,* as an ingenious critic observes, *the siege of* THEBES *and* TROJAN *war were favourite stories; the characters and incidents of which they were mixing perpetually with their Romances* [c]. And to this persuasion and practice of the Romance-writers CERVANTES plainly alludes, when he makes Don QUIXOTE say—— *If the stories of Chivalry be lies, so must it also be, that there ever was a* HECTOR, *or an* ACHILLES, *or a* TROJAN WAR [d]—a sly stroke of satire, by which this mortal foe of Chivalry would, I suppose, insinuate that the *Grecian* Romances were just as extravagant and as little credible, as the *Gothic.* Or, whatever his purpose might be, the resemblance between them, you see, is confessed, and hath now

[c] Mr. WARTON'S Observations on SPENSER, vol. i. p. 175.

[d] Don QUIXOTE, b. iv. c. 22.

been shewn in so many instances that there will hardly be any doubt of it. And though you say true, that ignorance and barbarity itself might account for some circumstances of this resemblance; yet the parallel would hardly have held so long, and run so closely, if the *civil* condition of both had not been much the same.

So that when we see a sort of Chivalry, springing up among the *Greeks*, who were confessedly in a state resembling that of the feudal barons, and attended by the like symptoms and effects, is it not fair to conclude that the Chivalry of the *Gothic* times was owing to that common corresponding *state*, and received its character from it?

And this circumstance, by the way, accounts for the constant mixture, which the modern critic esteems so monstrous, of Pagan fable with the fairy tales of Romance. The passion for ancient learning, just then revived, might seduce the classic poets, such as SPENSER and TASSO for instance, into this practice; but the similar turn and genius of ancient manners, and of the fictions founded upon them, would make it appear easy and natural in all.

LETTER V.

I am aware, as you object to me, that, in the affair of *religion* and *gallantry*, the resemblance between the Hero and Knight is not so striking.

But the religious character of the Knight was an accident of the times, and no proper effect of his *civil* condition.

And that his devotion for the sex should so far surpass that of the Hero, is a fresh confirmation of my system.

For, though much, no doubt, might be owing to the different humour and genius of the East and West, antecedent to any customs and forms of government, and independent of them; yet the consideration had of the females in the feudal constitution will, of itself, account for this difference. It made them capable of succeeding to fiefs as well as the men. And does not one see, on the instant, what respect and dependence this privilege would draw upon them?

It was of mighty consequence who should obtain the grace of a rich heiress. And though, in the strict feudal times, she was supposed to be in the power and disposal of her superior

Lord, yet this rigid state of things did not last long; and, while it did last, could not abate much of the homage that would be paid to the fair feudatary. LETTER V.

Thus, when interest had begun the habit, the language of love and flattery would soon do the rest. And to what that language tended, you may see by the constant strain of the Romances themselves. Some distressed damsel was the spring and mover of every Knight's adventure. She was to be rescued by his arms, or won by the fame and admiration of his prowess.

The plain meaning of all which was this: that, as in those turbulent feudal times a protector was necessary to the weakness of the sex, so the courteous and valorous knight was to approve himself fully qualified for that office. And we find, he had other motives to set him on work than the mere charms and graces, though ever so bewitching, of the person addressed.

Hence then, as I suppose, the custom was introduced: and, when introduced, you will hardly wonder it should operate much longer

LETTER V.

and further than the reason may seem to require, on which it was founded.

If you still insist that I carry this matter too far, and that, in fact, the introduction of the female succession into fiefs was too late to justify me in accounting for the rise of feudal gallantry from that circumstance; you will only teach me to frame my answer in a more accurate manner.

First then, I shall confess that the way to avoid all confusion on this subject would be, to distinguish carefully between the state of things in the *early* feudal times, and that in the *later*, when the genius of the feudal law was much changed and corrupted; and that, whoever would go to the bottom of this affair, should keep a constant eye on this reasonable distinction.

But then, *secondly*, I may observe that this distinction is the less necessary to be attended to in the present case, because the law of female succession, whenever it was introduced, had certainly taken place long before the Romancers wrote, from whom we derive all our ideas of the feudal gallantry. So that, if you take their word for the gallantry of those times,

you may very consistently, if you please, accept my account of it. For it is but supposing that the feudal gallantry, such as they paint it, was the offspring of that privilege, such as they saw the ladies then possess, of feudal succession. And the connexion between these two things is so close and so natural, that we cannot be much mistaken in deducing the one from the other.

In conclusion of this topic, I must just observe to you, that the two poems of HOMER express in the liveliest manner, and were intended to expose, the capital mischiefs and inconveniencies arising from the *political state* of old *Greece*; the *Iliad*, the dissensions that naturally spring up amongst a number of independent chiefs; and the *Odyssey*, the insolence of their greater subjects, more especially when unrestrained by the presence of their sovereign.

These were the subjects of his pen. And can any thing more exactly resemble the condition of the *feudal times*, when, on occasion of any great enterprise, as that of the Crusades, the designs of the confederate Christian states were perpetually frustrated, or interrupted at least, by the dissensions of their leaders; and

LETTER V.

their affairs at home as perpetually distressed and disordered by domestic licence, and the rebellious usurpations of their greater vassals?

It is true, as to the charge of *domestic licence*, so exactly does the parallel run between old *Greece* and old *England*, I find one exception to it, in each country: and that *one*, a Romance-critic would shew himself very uncourteous, if he did not take a pleasure to celebrate. GUY, the renowned earl of *Warwick*, old stories say, returned from the holy wars to his lady in the disguise of a pilgrim or beggar, as ULYSSES did to PENELOPE. What the suspicions were of the Knight and the Hero, the contrivance itself but too plainly declares. But their fears were groundless in both cases. Only the Knight seems to have had the advantage of the Prince of ITHACA: for, instead of rioting suitors to drive out of his castle, he had only to contemplate his good lady in the peaceful and pious office of *distributing daily alms to* XIII *poor men*.

No conclusion, however, is to be drawn from a single instance; and, in general, it is said, the adventurers into the Holy Land could no more depend on the fidelity of their spouses, than of their vassals. So that, in all respects,

Jerusalem was to the *European*, what *Troy* had been to the *Grecian* heroes. And, though the *Odyssey* found no rival among the *Gothic* poems, you will think it natural enough from these corresponding circumstances, that TASSO's immortal work should be planned upon the model of the *Iliad*. LETTER V.

LETTER VI.

LETTER VI. LET it be no surprise to you that, in the close of my last Letter, I presumed to bring the *Gierusalemme liberata* into competition with the *Iliad.*

So far as the heroic and *Gothic* manners are the same, the pictures of each, if well taken, must be equally entertaining. But I go further, and maintain that the circumstances, in which they differ, are clearly to the advantage of the *Gothic* designers.

You see, my purpose is to lead you from this forgotten Chivalry to a more amusing subject; I mean, the *Poetry* we still read, though it was founded upon it.

Much has been said, and with great truth, of the felicity of HOMER's age, for poetical manners. But, as HOMER was a citizen of the world, when he had seen in *Greece,* on the one hand, the manners he has described, could he, on the other hand, have seen in the West the manners of the feudal ages, I make no

doubt but he would certainly have preferred the latter. And the grounds of this preference would, I suppose, have been, "*the improved* "*gallantry of the Gothic knights*; and the "*superior solemnity of their superstitions.*" LETTER VI.

If any great poet, like HOMER, had flourished in these times, and given the feudal manners from the *life* (for, after all, SPENSER and TASSO came too late, and it was impossible for them to paint truly and perfectly what was no longer seen or believed); this preference, I persuade myself, had been very sensible. But their fortune was not so happy:

——omnes illacrymabiles
Urgentur, ignotique longâ
Nocte, carent quia vate sacro.

As it is, we may take a guess of what the subject was capable of affording to real genius, from the rude sketches we have of it in the old Romancers. And it is but looking into any of them to be convinced, that the GALLANTRY, which inspired the feudal times, was of a nature to furnish the poet with finer scenes and subjects of description in every view, than the simple and uncontrolled barbarity of the *Grecian.*

LETTER VI.

The principal entertainment arising from the delineation of these consists in the exercise of the boisterous passions, which are provoked and kept alive, from one end of the *Iliad* to the other, by every imaginable scene of rage, revenge, and slaughter. In the other, together with these, the gentler and more humane affections are awakened in us by the most interesting displays of love and friendship; of love, elevated to its noblest heights; and of friendship, operating on the purest motives. The mere variety of these paintings is a relief to the reader, as well as writer. But their beauty, novelty, and pathos, give them a vast advantage, on the comparison.

So that, on the whole, though the spirit, passions, rapine, and violence, of the two sets of manners were equal, yet there was an elegance, a variety, a dignity in the feudal, which the other wanted.

As to RELIGIOUS MACHINERY, perhaps the popular system of each was equally remote from reason; yet the latter had something in it more amusing, as well as more awakening to the imagination.

The current popular tales of Elves and Fairies were even fitter to take the credulous mind, and charm it into a willing admiration of the *specious miracles* which wayward fancy delights in, than those of the old traditionary rabble of Pagan divinities. And then, for the more solemn fancies of witchcraft and incantation, the *Gothic* are above measure striking and terrible. Letter VI.

You will tell me, perhaps, that these fancies, as terrible as they were, are but of a piece with those of Pagan superstition; and that nothing can exceed what the classic writers have related or feigned of its magic and necromantic horrors.

To spare you the trouble of mustering up against me all that your extensive knowledge of antiquity would furnish, let me confess to you that many of the ancient poets have occasionally adorned this theme. If, among twenty others, I select only the names of OVID, SENECA, and LUCAN, it is, because these writers, by the character of their genius, were best qualified for the task, and have, besides, exerted their whole strength upon it. LUCAN, especially, has drawn out all the pomp of his eloquence in celebrating those THESSALIAN CHARMS,

Letter VI.

ficti quas nulla licentia monstri
Transierat, quarum, quicquid non creditur, ars est.

Yet STILL I pretend to shew you that all his prodigies, fall short of the *Gothic*: and you will come the less reluctantly into my sentiments, if you reflect, "THAT the thick and troubled stream of superstition, which flowed so plentifully in the classic ages, has been constantly deepening and darkening by the confluence of those supplies, which ignorance and corrupted religion have poured in upon it."

First, you will call to mind that all the gloomy visions of dæmons and spirits, which sprung out of the Alexandrian or Platonic philosophy, were in the later ages of Paganism engrafted on the old stock of classic superstition. These portentous dreams, *new hatched to the woful time*, as SHAKESPEAR speaks, enabled APULEIUS to outdo LUCAN himself, in some of his magic scenes and exhibitions.

Next, you will observe that a fresh and exhaustless swarm of the direst superstitions took their birth in the frozen regions of the North, and were naturally enough conceived in the imaginations of a people involved in tenfold

darkness; I mean, in the thickest shades of ignorance, as well as in the gloom of their comfortless woods and forests. I call these the *direst superstitions;* for though the South and East may have produced some that shew more wild and fantastic, yet those of the North have ever been of a more sombrous and horrid aspect, agreeably to the singular circumstances and situation of that savage and benighted people. Letter VI.

These dismal fancies, which the barbarians carried out with them in their migrations into the North-west, took the readier and the faster hold of men's minds, from the kindred darkness into which the Western world was then fallen, and from the desolation (so apt to engender all fearful conceits and apprehensions) which every where attended the incursions of those ravagers.

Lastly, before the Romancers applied themselves to dress up these dreadful stories, Christian superstition had grown to its height, and had transferred on the magic system all its additional and supernumerary horrors.

Taking, now, the whole together, you will clearly see what we are to conclude of the *Gothic* system of prodigy and enchantment;

Letter VI. which was not so properly a single system, as the aggregate,

— of all that nature breeds
Perverse; all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Which fables yet had feign'd or fear conceiv'd,

For, to the frightful forms of ancient necromancy (which easily travelled down to us, when the fairer offspring of pagan invention lost its way, or was swallowed up in the general darkness of the barbarous ages) were now joined the hideous phantasms which had terrified the Northern nations; and, to complete the horrid groupe, with these were incorporated the still more tremendous spectres of Christian superstition,

In this state of things, as I said, the Romancers went to work; and with these multiplied images of terror on their minds, you will conclude, without being at the pains to form particular comparisons, that they must manage ill indeed, not to surpass, in this walk of magical incantation, the original classic fablers.

But, if you require a comparison, I can tell you where it is to be made, with much ease, and to great advantage: I mean, in SHAKESPEAR's *Macbeth*, where you will find (as his

best critic observes) "the *Danish* or *Northern*, "intermixed with the *Greek* and *Roman* en- "chantments; and all these worked up toge- "ther with a sufficient quantity of our own "country superstitions. So that SHAKESPEAR'S "*Witch-Scenes* (as the same writer adds) are "like the *charms* they prepare in one of them: "where the ingredients are gathered from every "thing shocking in the *natural* world; as "here, from every thing absurd in the *moral*." LETTER VI.

Or, if you suspect this instance, as deriving somewhat of its force and plausibility from the *magic* hand of this critic, you may turn to another in a great poet of that time; who has been at the pains to make the comparison himself, and whose word, as he gives it in honest prose, may surely be taken.

In a work of B. JONSON, which he calls THE MASQUE OF QUEENS, there are some Witch-scenes; written with singular care, and in emulation, as it may seem, of SHAKESPEAR'S; but certainly with the view (for so he tells us himself) *of reconciling the practice of antiquity to the neoteric, and making it familiar with our popular witchcraft.*

This Masque is accompanied with notes of the learned author, who had rifled all the

LETTER VI.

stores of ancient and modern *Demonomagy*, to furnish out his entertainment; and who takes care to inform us, under each head, whence he had fetched the ingredients, out of which it is compounded.

In this elaborate work of JONSON you have, then, an easy opportunity of comparing the ancient with the modern magic. And though, as he was an idolater of the ancients, you will expect him to draw freely from that source, yet from the large use he makes, too, of his other more recent authorities, you will perceive that some of the darkest shades of his picture are owing to hints and circumstances which he had catched, and could only catch, from the *Gothic* enchantments. Even such of these circumstances, as, taken by themselves, seem of less moment, should not be overlooked, since (as the poet well observes of them) *though they be but minutes in ceremony, yet they make the act more dark and full of horror.*

THUS MUCH, then, may serve for a cast of SHAKESPEAR'S and JONSON'S magic: abundantly sufficient, I must think, to convince you of the superiority of the *Gothic* charms and incantations, to the classic.

Though, after all, the conclusion is not to be drawn so much from particular passages, as from the *general impression* left on our minds, in reading the ancient and modern poets. And this is so much in favour of the *latter*, that Mr. ADDISON scruples not to say, "The ancients have not much of this poetry among "them; for indeed (continues he) almost the "whole substance of it owes its original to the "darkness and superstition of later ages—Our "forefathers looked upon nature with more "reverence and horror, before the world was "enlightened by learning and philosophy; and "loved to astonish themselves with the apprehensions of witchcraft, prodigies, charms, "and inchantments. There was not a village "in *England*, that had not a ghost in it; the "church-yards were all haunted; every large "common had a circle of fairies belonging to "it; and there was scarce a shepherd to be "met with, who had not seen a spirit." LETTER VI.

We are upon enchanted ground, my friend; and you are to think yourself well used, that I detain you no longer in this fearful circle. The glympse, you have had of it, will help your imagination to conceive the rest. And without more words you will readily apprehend that the fancies of our modern bards are

LETTER VI.

not only more gallant, but, on a change of the scene, more sublime, more terrible, more alarming, than those of the classic fablers. In a word, you will find that the *manners* they paint, and the *superstitions* they adopt, are the more poetical for being *Gothic*.

LETTER VII.

BUT nothing shews the difference of the two systems under consideration more plainly, than the effect they really had on the Two greatest of our Poets; at least the two which an *English* reader is most fond to compare with HOMER; I mean, SPENSER and MILTON.

It is not to be doubted but that each of these bards had kindled his poetic fire from classic fables. So that, of course, their prejudices would lie that way. Yet they both appear, when most inflamed, to have been more particularly rapt with the *Gothic* fables of Chivalry.

SPENSER, though he had been long nourished with the spirit and substance of HOMER and VIRGIL, chose the times of Chivalry for his theme, and Fairy Land for the scene of his fictions. He could have planned, no doubt, an heroic design on the exact classic model: or, he might have trimmed between the *Gothic* and classic, as his contemporary

LETTER VII.

TASSO did. But the charms of *fairy* prevailed. And if any think, he was seduced by ARIOSTO into this choice, they should consider that it could be only for the sake of his subject; for the genius and character of these poets was widely different.

Under this idea then of a *Gothic*, not classical poem, the *Fairy Queen* is to be read and criticized. And on these principles it would not be difficult to unfold its merit in another way than has been hitherto attempted.

MILTON, it is true, preferred the classic model to the *Gothic*. But it was after long hesitation; and his favourite subject was ARTHUR *and his Knights of the round table*. On this he had fixed for the greater part of his life. What led him to change his mind was, partly, as I suppose, his growing fondness for religious subjects; partly, his ambition to take a different rout from SPENSER; but chiefly perhaps, the discredit into which the stories of Chivalry had now fallen by the immortal satire of CERVANTES. Yet we see through all his poetry, where his enthusiasm flames out most, a certain predilection for the legends of Chivalry before the fables of *Greece*.

This circumstance, you know, has given offence to the austerer and more mechanical critics. They are ready to censure his judgment, as juvenile and unformed, when they see him so delighted, on all occasions, with the *Gothic* romances. But do these censors imagine that MILTON did not perceive the defects of these works, as well as they? No: it was not the *composition* of books of Chivalry, but the *manners* described in them, that took his fancy; as appears from his *Allegro*— LETTER VII.

Towred cities please us then
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold
In weeds of peace high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit, or arms, while both contend
To win her grace, whom all commend.

And when in the *Penseroso* he draws, by a fine contrivance, the same kind of image to sooth melancholy which he had before given to excite mirth, he indeed extols an *author*, or two, of these romances, as he had before, in general, extolled the *subject* of them: but they are authors worthy of his praise; not the writers of *Amadis*, and *Sir Launcelot of the*

LETTER VII. *Lake*; but Fairy SPENSER, and CHAUCER himself, who has left an unfinished story on the *Gothic* or feudal model.

Or, call up him that left half-told
The story of CAMBUSCAN bold,
Of CAMBALL and of ALGARSIFF,
And who had CANACE to wife,
That own'd the virtuous ring and glass,
And of the wondrous horse of brass,
On which the Tartar king did ride;
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung
Of turneys and of trophies hung,
Of forests and inchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.

The conduct then of these two poets may incline us to think with more respect, than is commonly done, of the *Gothic manners*; I mean, as adapted to the uses of the greater poetry.

I shall add nothing to what I before observed of SHAKESPEAR, because the sublimity (the divinity, let it be, if nothing else will serve) of his genius kept no certain rout, but rambled at hazard into all the regions of human life and manners. So that we can

hardly say what he preferred, or what he rejected, on full deliberation. Yet one thing is clear, that even he is greater when he uses *Gothic* manners and machinery, than when he employs classical: which brings us again to the same point, that the former have, by their nature and genius, the advantage of the latter in producing the *sublime*.

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LETTER VIII. I SPOKE "of criticizing SPENSER's poem "under the idea, not of a classical, but *Gothic* "composition."

It is certain, much light might be thrown on that singular work, were an able critic to consider it in this view. For instance, he might go some way towards explaining, perhaps justifying, the general plan and *conduct* of the *Fairy Queen*, which, to classical readers, has appeared indefensible.

I have taken the fancy, with your leave, to try my hand on this curious subject.

When an architect examines a *Gothic* structure by *Grecian* rules, he finds nothing but deformity. But the *Gothic* architecture has its own rules, by which when it comes to be examined, it is seen to have its merit, as well as the *Grecian*. The question is not, which of the two is conducted in the simplest or truest taste: but whether there be not sense and design in both, when scrutinized by the laws on which each is projected.

The same observation holds of the two sorts of poetry. Judge of the *Fairy Queen* by the classic models, and you are shocked with its disorder: consider it with an eye to its *Gothic* original, and you find it regular. The unity and simplicity of the former are more complete: but the latter has that sort of unity and simplicity, which results from its nature. LETTER VIII.

The *Fairy Queen* then, as a *Gothic* poem, derives its METHOD, as well as the other characters of its composition, from the established modes and ideas of Chivalry.

It was usual, in the days of knight-errantry, at the holding of any great feast, for knights to appear before the prince, who presided at it, and claim the privilege of being sent on any adventure to which the solemnity might give occasion. For it was supposed that, when such a *throng of knights and barons bold*, as MILTON speaks of, were got together, the distressed would flock in from all quarters, as to a place where they knew they might find and claim redress for all their grievances.

This was the real practice, in the days of pure and ancient Chivalry. And an image of this practice was afterwards kept up in the

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castles of the great, on any extraordinary festival or solemnity: of which, if you want an instance, I refer you to the description of a feast made at *Lisle* in 1453, in the court of PHILIP the good, duke of *Burgundy*, for a Crusade against the *Turks*: as you may find it given at large in the memoirs of MATTHIEU DE CONCI, OLIVIER DE LA MARCHE, and MONSTRELET.

That feast was held for *twelve* days: and each day was distinguished by the claim and allowance of some adventure.

Now, laying down this practice as a foundation for the poet's design, you will see how properly the *Fairy Queen* is conducted.

——"I DEVISE," says the poet himself in his letter to Sir W. RALEIGH, "that the *Fairy* "*Queen* kept her annual feaste xii days: upon "which xii several days, the occasions of the "xii several adventures happened; which "being undertaken by xii several knights, are "in these xii books severally handled."

Here you have the poet delivering his own method, and the reason of it. It arose out of the order of his subject. And would you desire a better reason for his choice?

Yes; you will say, a poet's method is not that of his subject. I grant you, as to the order of *time*, in which the recital is made; for here, as SPENSER observes (and his own practice agrees to the rule), lies the main difference between *the poet historical, and the historiographer*: the reason of which is drawn from the nature of *Epic* composition itself, and holds equally let the subject be what it will, and whatever the system of manners be, on which it is conducted. Gothic or Classic makes no difference in this respect. LETTER VIII.

But the case is not the same with regard to the general plan of a work, or what may be called the order of *distribution*, which is and must be governed by the subject-matter itself. It was as requisite for the *Fairy Queen* to consist of the adventures of twelve Knights, as for the *Odyssey* to be confined to the adventures of one Hero: justice had otherwise not been done to his subject.

So that if you will say any thing against the poet's method, you must say that he should not have chosen this subject. But this objection arises from your classic ideas of Unity, which have no place here; and are in every view foreign to the purpose, if the poet has

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found means to give his work, though consisting of many parts, the advantage of Unity. For in some reasonable sense or other, it is agreed, every work of art must be *one*, the very idea of a work requiring it.

If you ask then, what is this *Unity* of SPENSER's Poem? I say, It consists in the relation of its several adventures to one common *original*, the appointment of the *Fairy Queen*; and to one common *end*, the completion of the *Fairy Queen's* injunctions. The knights issued forth on their adventures on the breaking up of this annual feast: and the next annual feast, we are to suppose, is to bring them together again from the atchievement of their several charges.

This, it is true, is not the classic Unity, which consists in the representation of one entire action: but it is an Unity of another sort, an unity resulting from the respect which a number of related actions have to one common purpose. In other words, it is an unity of *design*, and not of action.

This *Gothic* method of design in poetry may be, in some sort, illustrated by what is called the *Gothic* method of design in gar-

dening. A wood or grove cut out into many separate avenues or glades was among the most favourite of the works of art, which our fathers attempted in this species of cultivation. These walks were distinct from each other, had each their several destination, and terminated on their own proper objects. Yet the whole was brought together and considered under one view, by the relation which these various openings had, not to each other, but to their common and concurrent center. You and I are, perhaps, agreed that this sort of gardening is not of so true a taste as that which *Kent and Nature* have brought us acquainted with; where the supreme art of the designer consists in disposing his ground and objects into an *entire landskip;* and grouping them, if I may use the term, in so easy a manner, that the careless observer, though he be taken with the symmetry of the whole, discovers no art in the combination: LETTER VIII.

In lieto aspetto il bel giardin s'aperse,
Acque stagnanti, mobili cristalli,
Fior vari, e varie piante, herbe diverse,
Apriche collinette, ombrose valli,
Selve, e spelunche in UNA VISTA offerse:
E quel, che'l bello, e'l caro accresce à l'opre,
L' arte, che tutto sà, nulla si scopre.

TASSO, C. XVI. S. IX.

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This, I say, may be the truest taste in gardening, because the simplest: yet there is a manifest regard to unity in the other method; which has had its admirers, as it may have again, and is certainly not without its *design* and beauty.

But to return to our poet. Thus far he drew from *Gothic* ideas; and these ideas, I think, would lead him no further. But, as SPENSER knew what belonged to classic composition, he was tempted to tie his subject still closer together by *one* expedient of his own, and by *another* taken from his classic models.

His *own* was, to interrupt the proper story of each book, by dispersing it into several; involving by this means, and as it were intertwisting the several actions together, in order to give something like the appearance of one action to his twelve adventures. And for this conduct, as absurd as it seems, he had some great examples in the *Italian* poets, though, I believe, they were led into it by different motives.

The *other* expedient, which he borrowed from the classics, was, by adopting one superior character, which should be seen throughout.

Prince ARTHUR, who had a separate adventure of his own, was to have his part in each of the other; and thus several actions were to be embodied by the interest which one principal Hero had in them all. It is even observable, that SPENSER gives this adventure of Prince ARTHUR, in quest of GLORIANA, as the proper subject of his poem. And upon this idea the late learned editor of the *Fairy Queen* has attempted, but, I think, without success, to defend the unity and simplicity of its fable. The truth was, the violence of classic prejudices forced the poet to affect this appearance of unity, though in contradiction to his *Gothic* system. And, as far as we can judge of the tenour of the whole work from the finished half of it, the adventure of Prince ARTHUR, whatever the author pretended, and his critic too easily believed, was but an after-thought; and, at least, with regard to the *historical fable*, which we are now considering, was only one of the expedients by which he would conceal the disorder of his *Gothic* plan. LETTER VIII.

And if this was his design, I will venture to say that both his expedients were injudicious. Their purpose was, to ally two things, in nature incompatible, the *Gothic*, and the classic unity; the effect of which misalliance was to

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discover and expose the nakedness of the *Gothic.*

I am of opinion then, considering the *Fairy Queen* as an epic or *narrative* poem constructed on *Gothic* ideas, that the poet had done well to affect no other unity than that of *design,* by which his subject was connected. But his poem is not simply narrative; it is throughout *allegorical:* he calls it *a perpetual allegory or dark conceit:* and this character, for reasons I may have occasion to observe hereafter, was even predominant in the *Fairy Queen.* His narration is subservient to his moral, and but serves to colour it. This he tells us himself at setting out,

Fierce wars and faithful loves shall *moralize* my song;

that is, shall serve for a vehicle, or instrument to convey the moral.

Now under this idea, the *Unity* of the *Fairy Queen* is more apparent. His twelve knights are to exemplify as many virtues, out of which one illustrious character is to be composed. And in this view the part of Prince ARTHUR in each book becomes *essential,* and yet not *principal;* exactly, as the poet has

contrived it. They who rest in the literal story, that is, who criticize it on the footing of a narrative poem, have constantly objected to this management. They say, it necessarily breaks the unity of design. Prince ARTHUR, they affirm, should either have had no part in the other adventures, or he should have had the chief part. He should either have done nothing, or more. This objection I find insisted upon by SPENSER's best critic[d]; and, I think, the objection is unanswerable: at least, I know of nothing that can be said to remove it, but what I have supposed above might be the purpose of the poet, and which I myself have rejected as insufficient.

But how faulty soever this conduct be in the literal story, it is perfectly right in the *moral:* and that for an obvious reason, though his critics seem not to have been aware of it. His chief hero was not to have the twelve virtues in the *degree* in which the knights had, each of them, their own (such a character would be a monster;) but he was to have so much of each as was requisite to form his superior character. Each virtue, in its perfection, is ex-

[d] Mr. WARTON, *Obs. on the F. Q.* p. 7. vol. i. *Lond.* 1762.

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emplified in its own knight; they are all, in a due degree, concentrated in Prince ARTHUR.

This was the poet's *moral:* and what way of expressing this moral in the *history*, but by making Prince ARTHUR appear in each adventure, and in a manner subordinate to its proper hero? Thus, though inferior to each in his own specific virtue, he is superior to all by uniting the whole circle of their virtues in himself: and thus he arrives, at length, at the possession of that bright form of *Glory*, whose ravishing beauty, as seen in a dream or vision, had led him out into these miraculous adventures in the land of Fairy.

The conclusion is, that, as an *allegorical* poem, the method of the *Fairy Queen* is governed by the justness of the *moral:* as a *narrative* poem, it is conducted on the ideas and usages of *Chivalry*. In either view, if taken by itself, the plan is defensible. But from the union of the two designs there arises a perplexity and confusion, which is the proper, and only considerable, defect of this extraordinary poem.

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NO doubt, SPENSER might have taken one single adventure, of the TWELVE, for the subject of his Poem; or he might have given the principal part in every adventure to Prince ARTHUR. By this means his fable had been of the classic kind, and its unity as strict as that of HOMER and VIRGIL. LETTER IX.

All this the poet knew very well: but his purpose was not to write a classic poem. He chose to adorn a *Gothic* story: and, to be consistent throughout, he chose that the *form* of his work should be of a piece with his subject.

Did the poet do right in this? I cannot tell: but, comparing his work with that of another great poet, who followed the system you seem to recommend, I see no reason to be peremptory in condemning his judgment.

The example of this poet deserves to be considered. It will afford, at least, a fresh confirmation of the point, I principally insist upon, *the pre-eminence of the* Gothic manners

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and fictions, as adapted to the ends of poetry, above the classic.

I observed of the famous TORQUATO TASSO, that, coming into the world a little of the latest for the success of the pure *Gothic* manner, he thought fit to *trim* between that and the classic model.

It was lucky for his fame, that he did so. For the *Gothic* fables falling every day more and more into contempt, and the learning of the times, throughout all *Europe*, taking a classic turn, the reputation of his work has been chiefly founded on the strong resemblance it has to the ancient *Epic* poems. His fable is conducted in the spirit of the *Iliad*, and with a strict regard to that unity of *action* which we admire in HOMER and VIRGIL.

But this is not all; we find a studied and close imitation of those poets, in many of the smaller parts, in the minuter incidents, and even in the descriptions and similes of his poem.

The classic reader was pleased with this deference to the public taste: he saw with delight the favourite beauties of HOMER and VIRGIL

reflected in the *Italian* poet; and was almost ready to excuse, for the sake of these, his magic tales and fairy enchantments. LETTER IX.

I said, was *almost ready*; for the offence given by these tales to the more fashionable sort of critics was so great, that nothing, I believe, could make full amends, in their judgment, for such extravagancies.

However, by this means, the *Gierusalemme Liberata* made its fortune amongst the *French* wits, who have constantly cried it up above the *Orlando Furioso*, and principally for this reason, that TASSO was more classical in his fable, and more sparing in the wonders of *Gothic* fiction, than his predecessor.

The *Italians* have indeed a predilection for their elder bard; whether from their prejudice for his subject; their admiration of his language; the richness of his invention; the comic air of his style and manner; or from whatever other reason.

Be this as it will, the *French* criticism has carried it before the *Italian*, with the rest of *Europe*. This dextrous people have found means to lead the taste, as well as set the

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fashions, of their neighbours: and ARIOSTO ranks but little higher than the rudest Romancer in the opinion of those who take their notions of these things from their writers.

But the same principle, which made them give TASSO the preference to ARIOSTO, has led them by degrees to think very unfavourably of TASSO himself. The mixture of the *Gothic* manner in his work has not been forgiven. It has sunk the credit of all the rest; and some instances of false taste in the expression of his sentiments, detected by their nicer critics, have brought matters to that pass, that, with their good will, TASSO himself should now follow the fate of ARIOSTO.

I will not say, that a little national envy did not perhaps mix itself with their other reasons for undervaluing this great poet. They aspired to a sort of supremacy in letters; and finding the *Italian* language and its best writers standing in their way, they have spared no pains to lower the estimation of both.

Whatever their inducements were, they succeeded but too well in their attempt. Our obsequious and over-modest critics were run down by their authority. Their taste of letters, with

some worse things, was brought among us at the Restoration. Their language, their manners, nay their very prejudices, were adopted by our polite king and his royalists. And the more fashionable wits, of course, set their fancies, as my Lord MOLESWORTH tells us the people of *Copenhagen* in his time did their clocks, by the court-standard. LETTER IX.

Sir W. DAVENANT opened the way to this new sort of criticism in a very elaborate preface to GONDIBERT; and his philosophic friend, Mr. HOBBES, lent his best assistance towards establishing the credit of it. These two fine letters contain, indeed, the substance of whatever has been since written on the subject. Succeeding wits and critics did no more than echo their language. It grew into a sort of cant, with which RYMER, and the rest of that school, filled their flimsy essays and rambling prefaces.

Our noble critic himself [e] condescended to take up this trite theme: and it is not to be told with what alacrity and self-complacency he flourishes upon it. The *Gothic manner*, as he calls it, is the favourite object of his rail-

[e] Lord SHAFTESBURY, *Adv. to an Author.*

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lery; which is never more lively or pointed, than when it exposes that "bad taste which "makes us prefer an ARIOSTO to a VIRGIL, "and a Romance (without doubt he meant, of "TASSO) to an *Iliad*." Truly, this critical sin requires an expiation; which yet is easily made by subscribing to his sentence, "That the "French indeed may boast of legitimate au- "thors of a just relish; but that the *Italian* "are good for nothing but to corrupt the taste "of those who have had no familiarity with "the noble antients[f]."

This ingenious nobleman is, himself, one of the *gallant votaries* he sometimes makes himself so merry with. He is perfectly enamoured of his *noble ancients*; and will fight with any man who contends, not that his Lordship's mistress is not fair, but that his own is fair also.

It is certain the French wits benefited by this foible. For pretending, in great modesty, to have formed themselves on the pure taste of his noble ancients, they easily drew his Lordship over to their party: while the *Italians*, more stubbornly pretending to a taste of their

[f] *Adv. to an Author*, Part III. S. II.

own, and chusing to *lye* for themselves, instead of adopting the authorised *lyes* of *Greece*, were justly exposed to his resentment. LETTER IX.

Such was the address of the *French* writers, and such their triumphs over the poor *Italians*.

It must be owned, indeed, they had every advantage on their side, in this contest with their masters. The taste and learning of *Italy* had been long on the decline; and the fine writers under LOUIS XIV. were every day advancing the *French* language, such as it is (simple, clear, exact, that is, fit for business and conversation; but for that reason, besides its total want of numbers, absolutely unsuited to the genius of the greater poetry), towards its last perfection. The purity of the ancient manner became well understood, and it was the pride of their best critics to expose every instance of false taste in the modern writers. The *Italian*, it is certain, could not stand so severe a scrutiny. But they had escaped better, if the most fashionable of the *French* poets had not, at the same time, been their best critic.

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A lucky word in a verse, which sounds well and every body gets by heart, goes further than a volume of just criticism. In short, the exact, but cold BOILEAU happened to say something of the *clinquant* of TASSO; and the magic of this word, like the report of ASTOLFO's horn in ARIOSTO, overturned at once the solid and well-built reputation of the *Italian* poetry.

It is not perhaps strange that this potent word should do its business in *France*. What was less to be expected, it put us into a fright on this side the water. Mr. ADDISON, who gave the law in taste here, took it up, and sent it about the kingdom in his polite and popular essays[5]. It became a sort of watchword among the critics; and, on the sudden, nothing was heard, on all sides, but the *clinquant* of TASSO.

After all, these two respectable writers might not intend the mischief they were doing. The observation was just; but was extended much further than they meant, by their witless followers and admirers. The effect was, as I said, that the *Italian* poetry was rejected in the gross, by virtue of this censure; though the authors of it had said no more than this,

[5] *Spectator*, vol. i. N° 5. vol. v. N° 369.

" that their best poet had some false thoughts, " and dealt, as they supposed, too much in " incredible fiction." LETTER IX.

I leave you to make your own reflexions on this short history of the *Italian* poetry. It is not my design to be its apologist in all respects. However, with regard to the *first* of these charges, I presume to say, that, as just as it is in the sense in which I persuade myself it was intended, there are more instances of natural sentiment, and of that divine simplicity we admire in the ancients, even in GUARINI's *Pastor Fido*, than in the best of the *French* poets.

And as to the *last* charge, I pretend to shew you, in my next Letter, that it implies no fault at all in the *Italian* poets.

LETTER X.

LETTER X. *CHI non sa che cosa sia Italia?*—If this question could ever be reasonably asked on any occasion, it must surely be when the wit and poetry of that people were under consideration. The enchanting sweetness of their tongue, the richness of their invention, the fire and elevation of their genius, the splendour of their expression on great subjects, and the native simplicity of their sentiments on affecting ones; all these are such manifest advantages on the side of the *Italian* poets, as should seem to command our highest admiration of their great and capital works.

Yet a different language has been held by our finer critics. And, in particular, you hear it commonly said of the tales of *Fairy*, which they first and principally adorned, "that they "are extravagant and absurd; that they sur-"pass all bounds, not of truth only, but of "probability; and look more like the dreams "of children, than the manly inventions of "poets."

All this, and more, has been said; and, if truly said, who would not lament LETTER X.

L'arte del poëtar troppo infelice?

For they are not the cold fancies of plebeian poets, but the golden dreams of ARIOSTO, the celestial visions of TASSO, that are thus derided.

But now, as to the *extravagance* of these fictions, it is frequently, I believe, much less than these laughers apprehend.

To give an instance or two, of this sort.

One of the strangest circumstances in those books, is that of the *women-warriors*, with which they all abound. BUTLER, in his *Hudibras*, who saw it only in the light of a poetical invention, ridicules it, as a most unnatural idea, with great spirit. Yet in this representation, they did but copy from the manners of the times. ANNA COMNENA tells us, in the life of her father, that the wife of ROBERT the *Norman* fought side by side with her husband, in his battles; that she would rally the flying soldiers, and lead them back to the charge: and NICETAS observes, that, in the time of MANUEL COMNENA, there were in one Cru-

LETTER X. sade many women, armed like men, on horseback.

What think you now of TASSO's *Clarinda*, whose prodigies of valour I dare say you have often laughed at? Or, rather, what think you of that constant pair,

"GILDIPPE et ODOARDO amanti e sposi,
"In valor d'arme, e in lealtà famosi?"

C. III. S. 40.

Again: what can be more absurd and incredible, it is often said, than the vast armies we read of in Romance? a circumstance, to which MILTON scruples not to allude in those lines of his *Paradise Regained*—

Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp,
When AGRICAN with all his northern powers
Besieg'd *Albracca*, as Romances tell,
The city' of GALLAPHRONE, from thence to win
The fairest of her sex, ANGELICA.

B. III. ver. 337.

The classical reader is much scandalized on these occasions, and never fails to cry out on the impudence of these lying fablers. Yet if he did but reflect on the prodigious swarms which *Europe* sent out in the Crusades, and that the transactions of those days furnished

the Romance-writers with their ideas and images, he would see that the marvellous in such stories was modest enough, and did not very much exceed the strict bounds of historical representation.

The first army, for instance, that marched for the Holy Land, even after all the losses it had sustained by the way, amounted, we are told, when it came to be mustered in the plains of *Asia*, to no less than seven hundred thousand fighting men: a number, which would almost have satisfied the Romancer's keenest appetite for wonder and amplification.

A third instance may be thought still more remarkable.

"We read perpetually of walls of fire raised "by magical art to stop the progress of knights-"errant. In TASSO, the wizard ISMENO guards "the inchanted forest with walls of fire. In "the *Orlando Inamorato*, L. III. C. I. MAN-"DRICARDO is endeavoured to be stopped by "enchanted flames; but he makes his way "through all."

Thus far the learned editor of the *Fairy Queen* [Notes on B. III. C. XI. S. 25.] who con-

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tents himself, like a good Romance-critic, with observing the fact, without the irreverence of presuming to account for it. But if the profane will not be kept within this decent reserve, we may give them to understand, that this fancy, as wild as it appears, had some foundation in *truth*. For I make no question but these *fires*, raised by magical art, to stop the progress of assailants, were only the flames of FEUGREGEOIS, as it was called, that is of WILD-FIRE, which appeared so strange, on its first invention and application, in the barbarous ages.

We hear much of its wonders in the history of the Crusades; and even so late as SPENSER'S own time they were not forgotten. DAVILA, speaking of the siege of *Poitiers* in 1569, tells us——*Abbondavano nella citta le provisioni da guerra; tra le quali, quantita inestimabile di* FUOCHI ARTIFICIATI, *lavorati in diverse maniere, ne'quali avenano i defensori posta grandissima speranza di respingere gli assalti de'nemici.* Lib. v.

Hence, without doubt, the *magical flames and fiery walls*, of the *Gothic* Romancers [g];

[g] For an account of some other wonders in Romance, such as *enchanted arms, invulnerable bodies, flying horses*, &c. see *L'Esprit des Loix*, l. xxviii. c. 22.

and who will say, that the *specious miracles* of HOMER himself had a better foundation? LETTER X.

But, after all, this is not the sort of defence I mean chiefly to insist upon. Let others explain away these *wonders*, so offensive to certain philosophical critics. They are welcome to me in their own proper form, and with all the extravagance commonly imputed to them.

It is true, the only criticism, worth regarding, is that which these critics lay claim to, the philosophical. But there is a sort which looks like philosophy, and is not. May not that be the case here?

This criticism, whatever name it deserves, supposes that the poets, who are lyars by profession, expect to have their lyes believed. Surely they are not so unreasonable. They think it enough, if they can but bring you to *imagine* the possibility of them.

And how small a matter will serve for this? A legend, a tale, a tradition, a rumour, a superstition; in short, any thing is enough to be the basis of their air-formed *visions*. Does any capable reader trouble himself about the truth, or even the credibility of their fancies?

LETTER X.

Alas, no; he is best pleased when he is made to conceive (he minds not by what magic) the existence of such things as his reason tells him did not, and were never likely to, exist.

But here, to prevent mistakes, an explanation will be necessary. We must distinguish between the *popular belief*, and *that of the reader*. The fictions of poetry do, in some degree at least, require the *first* (they would, otherwise, deservedly pass for *dreams* indeed): but when the poet has this advantage on his side, and his fancies have, or may be supposed to have, a countenance from the current superstitions of the age in which he writes, he dispenses with the *last*, and gives his reader leave to be as sceptical, and as incredulous, as he pleases.

A fashionable *French* critic diverts himself with imagining "what a person, who comes "fresh from reading Mr. ADDISON and Mr. "LOCKE, would be apt to think of TASSO's "Enchantments[h]."

The *English* reader will, perhaps, smile at seeing these two writers so coupled together:

[h] VOLTAIRE, *Essai sur la Poësie Epique*, ch. vii.

and, with the critic's leave, we will put Mr. LOCKE out of the question. But if he be desirous to know what a reader of Mr. ADDISON would pronounce in the case, I can undertake to give him satisfaction. LETTER X.

Speaking of what Mr. DRYDEN calls, *the Fairy way of writing*, "Men of cold fancies "and philosophical dispositions, says he, ob- "ject to this kind of poetry, that it has not "probability enough to affect the imagination. "But—many are prepossest with such false "opinions, as dispose them to *believe* these "particular delusions: at least, we have all "*heard* so many pleasing relations in favour of "them, that we do not care for seeing through "the *falsehood*, and willingly give ourselves "up to so agreeable an imposture." [*Spect.* N° 419.]

Apply, now, this sage judgment of Mr. ADDISON to TASSO's *Enchantments*; and you see that a *falsehood convict* is not to be pleaded against a *supposed belief*, or even the *slightest hear-say*.

So little account does this wicked poetry make of philosophical or historical truth: all she allows us to look for, is *poetical truth*; a

LETTER X.

very slender thing indeed, and which the poet's eye, when rolling in *a fine frenzy*, can but just lay hold of. To speak in the philosophic language of Mr. HOBBES, it is something much *beyond the actual bounds, and only within the conceived possibility of nature.*

But the source of bad criticism, as universally of bad philosophy, is the abuse of terms. A poet, they say, must follow *nature*; and by nature we are to suppose can only be meant the known and experienced course of affairs in this world. Whereas the poet has a world of his own, where experience has less to do, than consistent imagination.

He has, besides, a supernatural world to range in. He has Gods, and Fairies, and Witches, at his command: and,

——————O! who can tell
The hidden *pow'r* of herbes, and might of magic spell?

SPENSER, B. V. C. ii.

Thus, in the poet's world, all is marvellous and extraordinary; yet not *unnatural* in one sense, as it agrees to the conceptions that are readily entertained of these magical and wonder-working natures.

This trite maxim of *following Nature* is further mistaken, in applying it indiscriminately to all sorts of poetry. LETTER X.

In those species which have men and manners professedly for their theme, a strict conformity with human nature is reasonably demanded.

Non hic Centauros, non Gorgonas, Harpyiasque
Invenies: hominem pagina nostra sapit;

is a proper motto to a book of epigrams; but would make a poor figure at the head of an epic poem.

Still further in those species that address themselves to the heart, and would obtain their end, not through the *imagination*, but through the *passions*, there the liberty of transgressing nature, I mean the real powers and properties of human nature, is infinitely restrained; and *poetical* truth is, under these circumstances, almost as severe a thing as *historical*.

The reason is, we must first *believe* before we can be *affected*.

But the case is different with the more sublime and creative poetry. This species,

LETTER X. addressing itself solely or principally to the Imagination; a young and credulous faculty, which loves to admire and to be deceived; has no need to observe those cautious rules of credibility, so necessary to be followed by him who would touch the affections and interest the heart.

This difference, you will say, is obvious enough: How came it then to be overlooked? From another mistake, in extending a particular precept of the drama into a general maxim.

The *incredulus odi* of HORACE ran in the heads of these critics, though his own words confine the observation singly to the stage:

Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus, et quæ
Ipse sibi tradit Spectator ——

That, which passes in *representation*, and challenges, as it were, the scrutiny of the eye, must be truth itself, or something very nearly approaching to it. But what passes in *narration*, even on the stage, is admitted without much difficulty—

multaque tolles
Ex oculis, quæ mox narret facundia presens.

In the epic narration, which may be called *absens facundia*, the reason of the thing shews this indulgence to be still greater. It appeals neither to the *eye* nor the *ear*, but simply to the *imagination*, and so allows the poet a liberty of multiplying and enlarging his impostures at pleasure, in proportion to the easiness and comprehension of that faculty [i].

These general reflexions hardly require an application to the present subject. The tales of Fairy are exploded, as fantastic and incredible. They would merit this contempt, if presented on the stage; I mean, if they were given as the proper subject of dramatic imitation, and the interest of the poet's plot were to be wrought out of the adventures of these marvellous persons. But the epic muse runs no risque in giving way to such fanciful exhibitions.

[i] A celebrated writer, whose good sense, or whose perverseness, would not suffer him to be the dupe of French prejudices, declares himself roundly of this opinion: "On "a voulu mettre en *representation* (says he, speaking of "the absurd magnificence of the *French* Opera) le MER- "VEILLEUX, qui, n'etant fait que pour être imaginé, EST "AUSSI BIEN PLACE DANS UN POEME EPIQUE que ridi- "culement sur un theatre." [*Nouv. Heloise*, p. II. l. xxiii.]

LETTER X.

You may call them, as one does, "extraor-"dinary dreams, such as excellent poets and "painters, by being over-studious, may have "in the beginning of fevers [k]."

The epic poet would acknowledge the charge, and even value himself upon it. He would say, "I leave to the sage dramatist the merit of being always broad awake, and always in his senses. The *divine dream* [l], and delirious fancy, are among the noblest of my prerogatives."

But the injustice done the *Italian* poets does not stop here. The cry is, "Magic and en-"chantments are senseless things. Therefore "the *Italian* poets are not worth the reading." As if, because the superstitions of HOMER and VIRGIL are no longer believed, their poems, which abound in them, are good for nothing.

Yes, you will say, their fine pictures of life and manners—

And may not I say the same, in behalf of ARIOSTO and TASSO? For it is not true that all is *unnatural* and monstrous in their poems,

k Sir W. DAVENANT's Preface.

l Θεῖος ὄνειρος. HOMER.

because of this mixture of the wonderful. Admit, for example, ARMIDA's marvellous conveyance to the happy Island; and all the rest of the love-story is as natural, that is, as suitable to our common notions of that passion, as any thing in VIRGIL or (if you will) VOLTAIRE. LETTER X.

Thus, you see, the apology of the *Italian* poets is easily made on every supposition. But I stick to my point, and maintain that the Fairy tales of TASSO do him more honour than what are called the more natural, that is, the classical parts of his poem. His imitations of the ancients have indeed their merit; for he was a genius in every thing. But they are faint and cold, and almost insipid, when compared with his *Gothic* fictions. We make a shift to run over the passages he has copied from VIRGIL. We are all on fire amidst the magical feats of ISMEN, and the enchantments of ARMIDA.

Magnanima menſogna, hor quando è il vero
Si bello, che si poſſa à te preporre?

I speak at least for myself; and must freely own, if it were not for these *lyes* of *Gothic* invention, I should scarcely be disposed to give the *Gierusalem Liberata* a second reading.

LETTER X.

I readily agree to the lively observation, "That impenetrable armour, inchanted castles, "invulnerable bodies, iron men, flying horses, "and other such things, are easily feigned by "them that dare [m]." But, with the observer's leave, not so feigned as we find them in the *Italian* poets, unless the writer have another quality, besides that of courage.

One thing is true, that the success of these fictions will not be great, when they have no longer any footing in the popular belief: and the reason is, that readers do not usually do as they ought, put themselves in the circumstances of the poet, or rather of those of whom the poet writes. But this only shews, that some ages are not so fit to write epic poems in, as others; not, that they should be otherwise written.

It is also true, that writers do not succeed so well in painting what they have heard, as what they believe, themselves, or at least observe in others a facility of believing. And on this account I would advise no modern poet to revive these Fairy tales in an epic poem. But still this is nothing to the case in hand, where we

[m] Mr. HOBBES's Letter.

are considering the merit of epic poems, written under other circumstances. LETTER X.

The Pagan Gods and *Gothic* Fairies were equally out of credit when MILTON wrote. He did well therefore to supply their room with Angels and Devils. If these too should wear out of the popular creed (and they seem in a hopeful way, from the liberty some late critics have taken with them) I know not what other expedients the epic poet might have recourse to; but this I know, the pomp of verse, the energy of description, and even the finest moral paintings, would stand him in no stead. Without *admiration* (which cannot be affected but by the marvellous of celestial intervention, I mean, the agency of superior natures really existing, or by the illusion of the fancy taken to be so) no epic poem can be long-lived.

I am not afraid to instance in the *Henriade* itself; which, notwithstanding the elegance of the composition, will in a short time be no more read than the *Gondibert* of Sir W. DAVENANT, and for the same reason.

Critics may talk what they will of *Truth and Nature*, and abuse the *Italian* poets as they will, for transgressing both in their incre-

Letter X. dible fictions. But, believe it, my friend, these fictions with which they have studied to delude the world, are of that kind of creditable deceits, of which a wise ancient pronounces with assurance, "*That they, who deceive, are "honester than they who do not deceive; and "they, who are deceived, wiser than they who "are not deceived.*"

LETTER XI.

BUT you are weary of hearing so much of these exploded fancies; and are ready to ask, if there be any truth in this representation, "Whence it has come to pass, that the classical manners are still admired and imitated by the poets, when the *Gothic* have long since fallen into disuse?" LETTER XI.

The answer to this question will furnish all that is now wanting to a proper discussion of the present subject.

One great reason of this difference certainly was, that the ablest writers of *Greece* ennobled the system of heroic manners, while it was fresh and flourishing; and their works, being master-pieces of composition, so fixed the credit of it in the opinion of the world, that no revolutions of time and taste could afterwards shake it.

Whereas the *Gothic* having been disgraced in their infancy by bad writers, and a new set of manners springing up before there were any

LETTER XI. better to do them justice, they could never be brought into vogue by the attempts of later poets; who yet, in spite of prejudice, and for the genuine charm of these highly poetical manners, did their utmost to recommend them.

But, FURTHER, the *Gothic* system was not only forced to wait long for real genius to do it honour; real genius was even very early employed against it.

There were two causes of this mishap. The old Romancers had even outraged the truth in their extravagant pictures of Chivalry; and Chivalry itself, such as it once had been, was greatly abated.

So that men of sense were doubly disgusted to find a representation of things *unlike* to what they observed in real life, and *beyond* what it was ever possible should have existed. However, with these disadvantages, there was still so much of the old spirit left, and the fascination of these wondrous tales was so prevalent, that a more than common degree of sagacity and good sense was required to penetrate the illusion.

It was one of this character, I suppose, that put the famous question to ARIOSTO, which

has been so often repeated that I shall spare you the disgust of hearing it. Yet long before his time an immortal genius of our own (so superior is the sense of some men to the age they live in) saw as far into this matter, as ARIOSTO's examiner. LETTER XI.

You will, perhaps, be as much surprised, as I was (when, many years ago, the observation was, first, made to me) to understand, that this sagacious person was DAN CHAUCER; who, in a reign that almost realized the wonders of Romantic Chivalry, not only discerned the absurdity of the old Romances, but has even ridiculed them with incomparable spirit.

"HIS RIME OF SIR TOPAZ in the *Canterbury* Tales (said the curious observer, on whose authority I am now building) is a manifest banter on these books, and may be considered as a sort of prelude to the adventures of Don QUIXOTE. I call it *a manifest banter*: for we are to observe that this was CHAUCER's own tale; and that, when in the progress of it the good sense of the Host is made to break in upon him, and interrupt him, CHAUCER approves his disgust, and, changing his note, tells the simple instructive tale of MELIBOEUS; *a moral tale virtuous*, as he terms it; to shew,

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what sort of fictions were most expressive of real life, and most proper to be put into the hands of the people.

It is, further, to be noted, that the tale of *the Giant* OLYPHANT *and Chylde* TOPAZ was not a fiction of his own, but a story of antique fame, and very celebrated in the days of Chivalry: so that nothing could better suit the poet's design of discrediting the old Romances, than the choice of this venerable legend for the vehicle of his ridicule upon them.

But what puts the satyric purpose of *the Rime of Sir* TOPAZ out of all question, is, that this short poem is so managed as, with infinite humour, to expose the leading impertinencies of books of Chivalry; the very *same*, which CERVANTES afterwards drew out, and exposed at large, in his famous history.

Indeed Sir TOPAZ is all Don QUIXOTE in little; as you will easily see from comparing the two knights together; who are drawn with the same features, are characterized by the same strokes, and differ from each other but as a sketch in miniature from a finished and full-sized picture.

1. CERVANTES is very particular in describing the *person* and *habit* of his Hero, agreeably to the known practice of the old Romancers. CHAUCER does the same by his knight, and in a manner that almost equals the arch-gravity of the *Spanish* author: Letter XI.

Sir TOPAZ was a doughty swaine,
White was his face as paine maine,
His lippes red as rose,
His ruddie is like scarlet in graine,
And I you tell in good certaine,
He had a seemely nose.

His haire, his berde, was like safroune,
That to his girdle raught adowne,
His shoone of cordewaine,
Of Bruges were his hosen broun,
His robe was of chekelatoun,
That cost many a jane.

2. CERVANTES tells us how Don QUIXOTE passed his time in the country, before he turned Knight-errant. CHAUCER, in the same spirit, celebrates his knight's country diversions of *hunting*, *hawking*, *shooting*, and *wrestling*, those known *prolusions* to feats of arms:

He couth hunt at the wilde dere,
And ride an hauking for by the rivere

LETTER XI.

With grey GOSHAUKE on honde,
Thereto he was a good archere,
Of wrastling was there none his pere
There any Ram should stonde.

3. The Knights of Romance were used to dedicate their services to some paragon of beauty, such as was only conceived to exist in the land of Fairy, and could no where be found in this vulgar disenchanted world. Hence one of the strongest features in Don QUIXOTE's character is the sublime passion he had conceived for an imaginary or fairy mistress. Sir TOPAZ is not behind him in this extravagance:

An Elfe-queene woll I love, I wis,
For in this world no woman is
To be my make in towne,
All other women I forsake
And to an Elfe-queene I me take
By dale and eke by downe.

4. Don QUIXOTE's passion for this idol of his fancy was so violent, that, after all the bangs and bruises of the day, instead of suffering his weary limbs to take any rest, it occupied him all night with incessant dreams and reveries of his mistress. Sir TOPAZ is in the same woful plight:

Sir TOPAZ eke so weary was—
That down he laid him in that place—
Oh, Saint MARY, benedicite
What aileth this love at me
To blind me so sore?
Me dreamed all this night parde
An Elfe-queen shall my leman be
And sleepe under my gore.

5. As the chastity of the hero of LA MANCHA is well known, from a variety of trying temptations, so Sir TOPAZ distinguishes himself by this knightly virtue:

Full many a maide bright in boure
They mourne for him their paramoure.
Whan hem were bet to sleepe,
But he was chaste and no lechoure,
And sweet as is the bramble floure
That bereth the red hipe.

6. The fight of Sir TOPAZ with the Giant of three heads, in honour of his mistress,

For needes must he fight
With a giant with heads thre,
For paramours and jolitie
Of one that shone full bright—

together with his arming, and the whole ridiculous preparation for the combat, described at large in several stanzas, is exactly in the

LETTER XI. style and taste of CERVANTES, on similar occasions.

7. CERVANTES gives us to understand that it was familiar with his knight to sleep in the open air, to endure all hardships that befell, and to let his horse graze by him. CHAUCER, in like manner, of his knight, with much humour:

> And for he was a knight auntrous,
> He nolde slepen in none house
> But liggen in his hood,
> His bright helme was his wanger
> And by him fed his destrer
> Of herbes fine and good.

8. And, lastly, as CERVANTES, after the example of the Romance-writers, will have it, that his knight surpasses all others of ancient fame, so DAN CHAUCER is careful to vindicate this high prerogative, to his hero:

> Men speaken of Romances of pris
> Of HORNECHILD and of IPOTIS,
> Of BEVIS and Sir GIE,
> Of Sir LIBEAUX and BLANDAMOURE;
> But Sir TOPAZ, he beareth the floure
> Of rial chivalrie."

Thus far, at least to this effect, the con- LETTER XI.
cealed author (for the dispensers of these fairy favours would not be inquired after) of this new interpretation of the *Rime of Sir* TOPAZ. Other circumstances of resemblance might be added (for when a well-grounded hint of this sort is once given, and opened in some instances, it is not difficult to pursue it), but one needs go no further to be certain that the general scope of this poem is Burlesque.

Only, I would observe, that though, in this ridiculous ballad, the poet clearly intended to expose the Romances of the time, as they were commonly written, he did not mean, absolutely and under every form, to condemn the kind of writing itself: as, I think, we must conclude from the serious air, and very different conduct, of the SQUIRE'S TALE; which SPENSER and MILTON were so particularly pleased with.

We learn too, from the same tale, that, though CHAUCER could be as pleasant on the other fooleries of Romance, as any modern critic, he let the *marvellous* of it escape his ridicule, or rather esteemed this character of the *Gothic* Romance, no foolery. For the tale of CAMBUSCAN is all over MARVELLOUS; and

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MILTON, by specifying the *virtuous ring and glass*, and the *wondrous horse of brass*, as the circumstances that charmed him most, shews very plainly, that, in his opinion, these amusing fictions were well placed, and of principal consideration, as they surely are, in this *Fairy way of writing*.

But, whatever our old Bard would insinuate by his management of this enchanting tale, and whatever conclusions have, in fact, been drawn from it by such superior and congenial spirits as our two epic poets, the *half-told* story of CAMBUSCAN could never atone for the mischiefs done to the cause of Romance, by the pointed ridicule of *the Rime of Sir* TOPAZ. Common readers would be naturally induced by it to reject the old Romances, in the gross: and thus it happened, according to the observation I set out with, "that these phantoms "of Chivalry had the misfortune to be laughed "out of countenance by men of sense, before "the substance of it had been fairly and truly "represented by any capable writer."

Still, the principal cause of all, which brought disgrace on the *Gothic* manners of Chivalry, no doubt, was, That these manners, which sprang out of the feudal system, were

as singular, as that system itself: so that when that political constitution vanished out of *Europe*, the manners, that belonged to it, were no longer seen or understood. There was no example of any such manners remaining on the face of the earth: and as they never did subsist but once, and are never likely to subsist again, people would be led of course to think and speak of them, as romantic, and unnatural. The consequence of which was a total contempt and rejection of them: while the classic manners, as arising out of the customary and usual situations of humanity, would have many archetypes, and appear natural even to those who saw nothing similar to them actually subsisting before their eyes. Letter XI.

Thus, though the manners of HOMER are perhaps as different from ours, as those of Chivalry itself, yet as we know that such manners always belong to rude and simple ages, such as HOMER paints; and actually subsist at this day in countries that are under the like circumstances of barbarity; we readily agree to call them *natural*, and even take a fond pleasure in the survey of them.

Your question then is easily answered, without any obligation upon me to give up the

LETTER XI.

Gothic manners as visionary and fantastic. And the reason appears, why the *Fairy Queen*, one of the noblest productions of modern poetry, is fallen into so general a neglect, that all the zeal of its commentators is esteemed officious and impertinent, and will never restore it to those honours which it has, once for all, irrecoverably lost.

In effect, what way of persuading the generality of readers that the romantic manners are to be accounted *natural*, when not one in ten-thousand knows enough of the barbarous ages, in which they arose, to believe they ever really existed?

Poor SPENSER then,

——— ——— "in whose gentle spright
The pure well-head of Poesie did dwell,"

must, for aught I can see, be left to the admiration of a few lettered and curious men: while the many are sworn together to give no quarter to the *marvellous*, or, which may seem still harder, to the *moral* of his song.

However, this great revolution in modern taste was brought about by degrees; and the steps, that led to it, may be worth the tracing in a distinct Letter.

LETTER XII.

THE wonders of Chivalry were still in the memory of men, were still existing, in some measure, in real life, when CHAUCER undertook to expose the barbarous relaters of them.

This ridicule, we may suppose, hastened the fall both of Chivalry and Romance. At least from that time the spirit of both declined very fast, and at length fell into such discredit, that when now SPENSER arose, and with a genius singularly fitted to immortalize the land of Fairy, he met with every difficulty and disadvantage to obstruct his design.

The age would no longer bear the naked letter of these amusing stories; and the poet was so sensible of the misfortune, that we find him apologizing for it on a hundred occasions.

But apologies, in such circumstances, rarely do any good. Perhaps, they only served to betray the weakness of the poet's cause, and to confirm the prejudices of his reader.

LETTER XII.

However, he did more than this. He gave an air of mystery to his subject, and pretended that his stories of knights and giants were but the cover to abundance of profound wisdom.

In short, to keep off the eyes of the prophane from prying too nearly into his subject, he threw about it the mist of allegory: he moralized his song: and the virtues and vices lay hid under his warriors and enchanters. A contrivance which he had learned indeed from his *Italian* masters: for TASSO had condescended to allegorise his own work; and the commentators of ARIOSTO had even converted the extravagances of the *Orlando Furioso*, into moral lessons.

And this, it must be owned, was a sober attempt in comparison of some projects that were made about the same time toserve the cause of the old, and now-expiring Romances. For it is to be observed, that the idolizers of those Romances did by them, what the votaries of HOMER had done by him. As the times improved and would less bear his strange tales, they *moralized* what they could, and turned the rest into mysteries of *natural science*. And as this last contrivance was principally designed to cover the monstrous stories of the *Pagan*

Gods, so it served the lovers of Romance to palliate the no less monstrous stories of *magic enchantments*. LETTER XII.

The editor or translator of the 24th book of AMADIS DE GAULE, printed at *Lyons* in 1577, has a preface explaining the whole secret, which concludes with these words, "Voyla, lecteur, le FRUIT, qui se peut recueiller du sens mystique des Romans antiques par les ESPRITS ESLEUS, le commun peuple soy contentant de la SIMPLE FLEUR DE LA LECTURE LITERALE."

But to return to SPENSER; who, as we have seen, had no better way to take in his distress, than to hide his fairy fancies under the mystic cover of moral allegory. The only favourable circumstance that attended him (and this no doubt encouraged, if it did not produce, his untimely project) was, that he was somewhat befriended in these fictions, even when interpreted according to the Letter, by the Romantic Spirit of his age; much countenanced, and for a time brought into fresh credit, by the Romantic ELIZABETH. Her inclination for the fancies of Chivalry is well known; and obsequious wits and courtiers would not be wanting, to feed and flatter it. In short, tilts and tour-

LETTER XII.

naments were in vogue: the *Arcadia* and the *Fairy Queen* were written.

With these helps the new spirit of Chivalry made a shift to support itself for a time, when reason was but dawning, as we may say, and just about to gain the ascendant over the portentous spectres of the imagination. Its growing splendour, in the end, put them all to flight, and allowed them no quarter even among the poets. So that MILTON, as fond as we have seen he was of the *Gothic* fictions, durst only admit them on the bye, and in the way of simile and illustration only.

And this, no doubt, was the main reason of his relinquishing his long-projected design of Prince ARTHUR, at last, for that of the *Paradise Lost;* where, instead of Giants and Magicians, he had Angels and Devils to supply him with the *marvellous*, with greater probability. Yet, though he dropped the tales, he still kept to the allegories of SPENSER. And even this liberty was thought too much, as appears from the censure passed on his *Sin and Death* by the severer critics.

Thus at length the magic of the old Romances was perfectly dissolved. They began

with reflecting an image indeed of the feudal manners, but an image magnified and distorted by unskilful designers. Common sense being offended with these perversions of truth and nature (still accounted the more monstrous, as the antient manners, they pretended to copy after, were now disused, and of most men forgotten), the next step was to have recourse to *allegories*. Under this disguise they *walked the world* a while; the excellence of the moral and the ingenuity of the contrivance making some amends, and being accepted as a sort of apology, for the absurdity of the literal story.

Under this form the tales of Fairy kept their ground, and even made their fortune at court; where they became, for two or three reigns, the ordinary entertainment of our princes. But reason, in the end (assisted however by party, and religious prejudices), drove them off the scene, and would endure these *lying wonders*, neither in their own proper shape, nor as masked in figures.

Henceforth, the taste of wit and poetry took a new turn: and the *Muse*, who had wantoned it so long in the world of fiction, was now constrained, against her will,

"To stoop with disenchanted wings to truth,"

LETTER XII.

as Sir JOHN DENHAM somewhere expresses her present enforced state, not unhappily.

What we have gotten by this revolution, you will say, is a great deal of good sense. What we have lost, is a world of fine fabling; the illusion of which is so grateful to the *charmed Spirit*, that, in spite of philosophy and fashion, *Fairy* SPENSER still ranks highest among the poets; I mean, with all those who are either come of that house, or have any kindness for it.

Earth-born critics, my friend, may blaspheme:

"But all the GODS are ravish'd with delight
"Of his celestial song, and music's wondrous
"might."

THE END OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.

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